The Saturday Review of Literature

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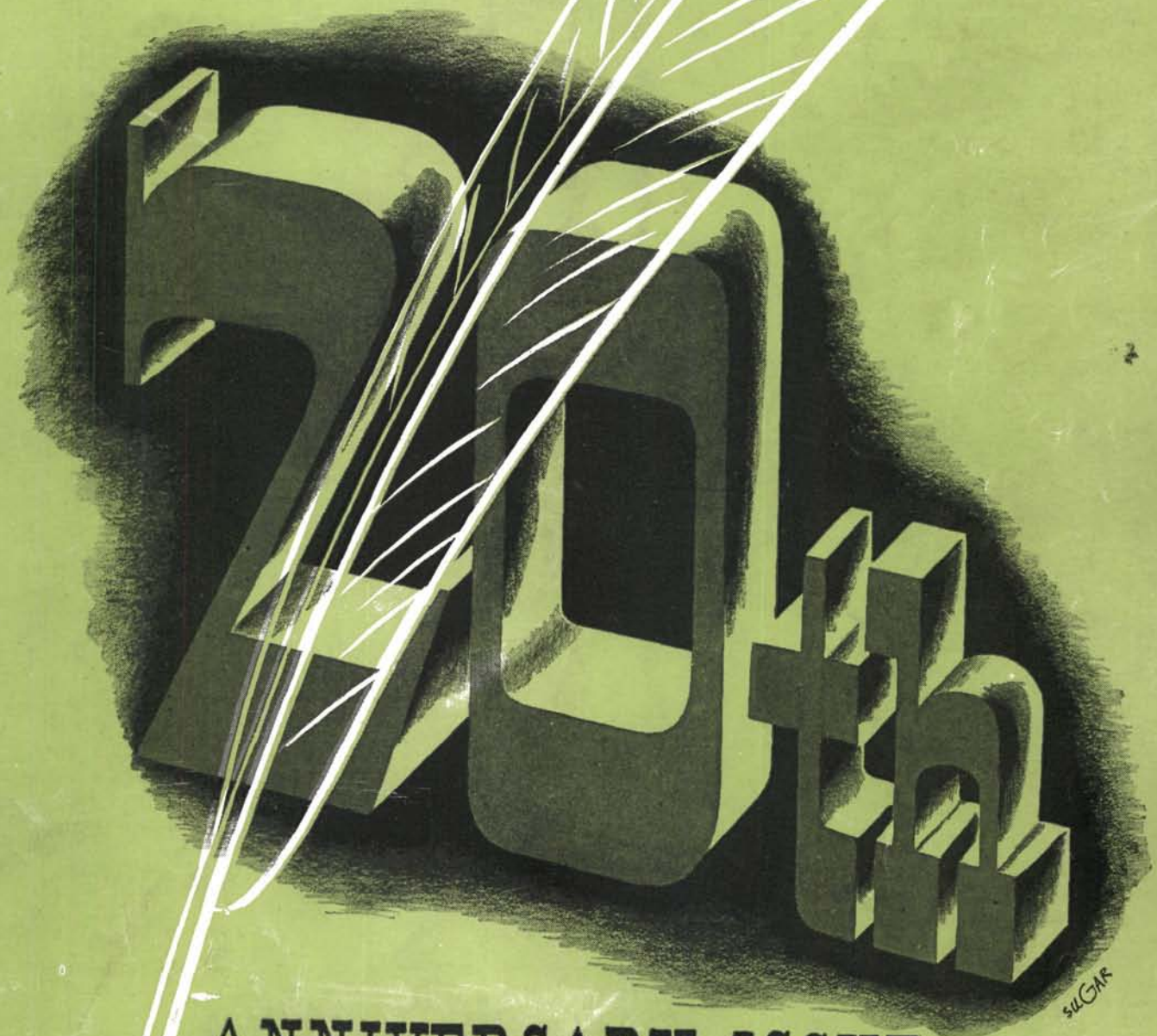

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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KARL K. DARROW
The Renaissance of Physics

E. A. HOOTON
Up from the Ape

F. S. C. NORTHROP
Science and First Principles

R. A. MILLIKAN
Cosmic Rays

SIR WILLIAM BRAGG
The Universe of Light

H. SPENCER JONES
Life on Other Worlds

A. WOLF
History of Science, Technology and Philosophy

WALTER LIPPMANN
Preface to Morals

T. DANTZIG
Number: The Language of Science

C. E. M. JOAD
Philosophical Aspects of Modern Science

HON. JAN C. SMUTS
Holism and Evolution

FRANCES MASON, EDITOR
Creation by Evolution

Chambers' Technical Dictionary

Contemporary American Philosophy

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Man Against Microbe

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MARGARET ARMSTRONG
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Darkness at Noon
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Inheritance
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South Riding
VAUGHAN WILKINS
And So—Victoria
STORM JAMESON
Cloudless May
G. B. STERN
The Young Matriarch
AGNES SLIGH TURNBULL
The Rolling Years
GRANVILLE HICKS
Only One Storm
CHARLES MORGAN
Sparkenbroke
DAVID RAME
Wine of Good Hope
ELIZABETH P. CHEVALIER
Drivin' Woman

AN COMPANY

between two wars

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CAROLINE MYTINGER
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MILDRED CABLE
The Gobi Desert
IRENE D. PADEN
The Wake of the Prairie Schooner
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H. C. LINK
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SIR WILLIAM DAMPIER
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A. N. WHITEHEAD
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Medieval Panorama

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Latin America

GERALD BRENAN
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Literature

THE NEW SHAKESPEARE
(continued)

A. E. HOUSMAN
The Name and Nature of Poetry

GEORGE SAMPSON
The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature

F. W. BATESON
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J. DOVER WILSON
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CAROLINE SPURGEON
Shakespeare's Imagery

ARTHUR BRYANT
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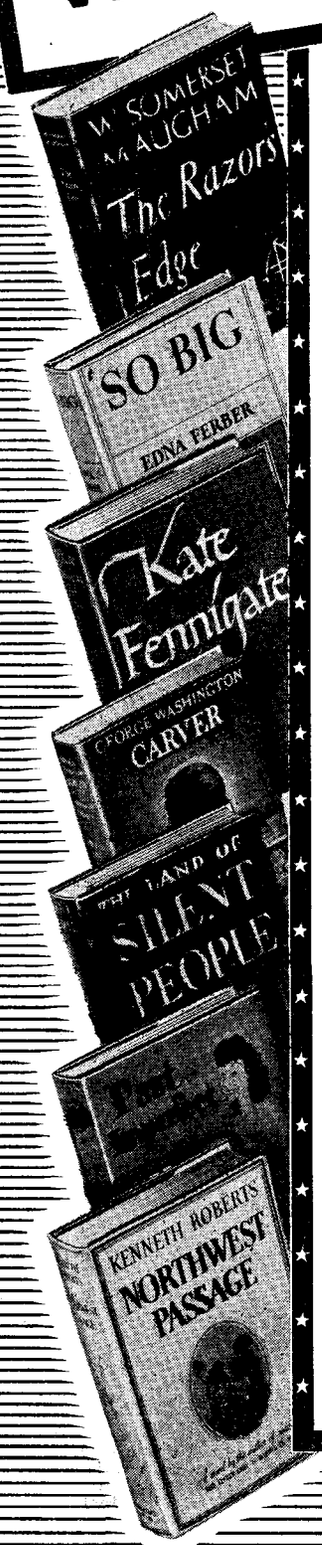

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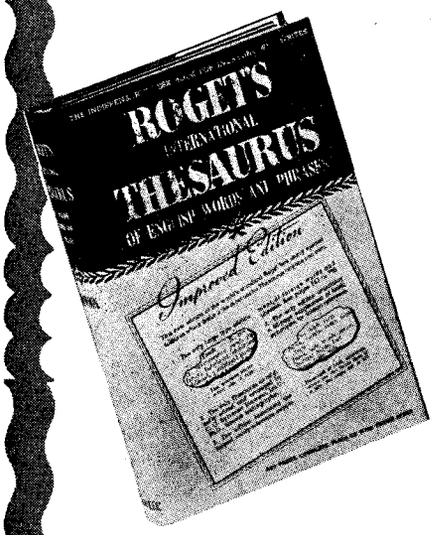

WE'LL leave it to posterity how many great books have been written in the past twenty years, the years of the *Saturday Review's* leadership in American criticism. We do know that this book has helped write them. "I wore out one copy entirely and had to buy another."
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Twentieth Anniversary Issue

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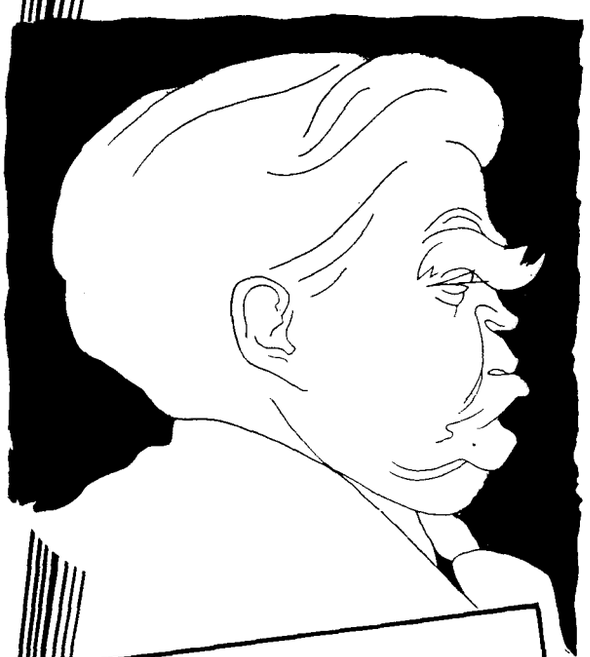
The Loneliest Man in America



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The twentieth birthday of the S. R. L. finds the Viking Press also completing its second decade. Here are some of the authors who have contributed to the literary history of these twenty years, and some of their active titles listed in the current Viking catalogue.

Richard Aldington
THE DUKE
LIFE FOR LIFE'S SAKE
THE VIKING BOOK OF POETRY

Roy Chapman Andrews
UNDER A LUCKY STAR

Norman Angell
LET THE PEOPLE KNOW

Charles A. Beard
THE REPUBLIC

Ludwig Bemelmans
NOW I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP
I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU
THE DONKEY INSIDE
LIFE CLASS
MY WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES

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THE STORY OF MODERN ART
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Irwin Edman
CANDLE IN THE DARK
PHILOSOPHER'S HOLIDAY
THE CONTEMPORARY AND HIS SOUL

Lion Feuchtwanger
SIMONE
DOUBLE, DOUBLE TOIL AND TROUBLE
JOSEPHUS
THE JEW OF ROME
JOSEPHUS AND THE EMPEROR
THE OPPERMANS
POWER

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AMERICA'S OLD MASTERS
DOCTORS ON HORSEBACK

Gene Fowler
GOOD NIGHT, SWEET PRINCE

Bruno Frank
ONE FAIR DAUGHTER
LOST HERITAGE
A MAN CALLED CERVANTES

Graham Greene
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THE LABYRINTHINE WAYS
THE CONFIDENTIAL AGENT
ANOTHER MEXICO
BRIGHTON ROCK

James Weldon Johnson
SAINT PETER RELATES AN INCIDENT
NEGRO AMERICANS, WHAT NOW
ALONG THIS WAY
GOD'S TROMBONES
THE BOOKS OF AMERICAN NEGRO SPIRITUALS

James Joyce
FINNEGANS WAKE
COLLECTED POEMS
A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN
DUBLINERS

Harold J. Laski
FAITH, REASON, AND CIVILIZATION
REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION OF OUR TIME
THE DANGER OF BEING A GENTLEMAN
PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND
THE STATE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

D. H. Lawrence
COLLECTED POEMS
LAST POEMS
THE LETTERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE
PHOENIX: THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS
THE RAINBOW
SONS AND LOVERS
WOMEN IN LOVE

Max Lerner
IDEAS FOR THE ICE AGE
IDEAS ARE WEAPONS
IT IS LATER THAN YOU THINK

Willy Ley
BEYOND THE STRATOSPHERE
THE LUNGFISH AND THE UNICORN
THE DAYS OF CREATION

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Roger Martin du Gard
THE WORLD OF THE THIBAULTS

Dorothy Parker
THE "PORTABLE" DOROTHY PARKER
HERE LIES
NOT SO DEEP AS A WELL

Elizabeth Madox Roberts
SONG IN THE MEADOW
BLACK IS MY TRUELOVE'S HAIR
HE SENT FORTH A RAVEN
THE GREAT MEADOW
MY HEART AND MY FLESH
THE TIME OF MAN
UNDER THE TREE

Ralph Roeder
CATHERINE DE' MEDICI
THE MAN OF THE RENAISSANCE

"Saki" (H. H. Munro)
THE NOVELS AND PLAYS
THE SHORT STORIES

Ivan T. Sanderson
ANIMALS NOBODY KNOWS
LIVING TREASURE
CARIBBEAN TREASURE
ANIMAL TREASURE

Upton Sinclair
PRESIDENTIAL AGENT
WIDE IS THE GATE
DRAGON'S TEETH
BETWEEN TWO WORLDS
WORLD'S END

John Steinbeck
THE "PORTABLE" STEINBECK
BOMBS AWAY
THE MOON IS DOWN
THE FORGOTTEN VILLAGE
THE GRAPES OF WRATH
THE LONG VALLEY
IN DUBIOUS BATTLE
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THE PURE IN HEART
TWILIGHT OF A WORLD

Max Werner
THE GREAT OFFENSIVE

Rebecca West
BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON
THE THINKING REED

Alexander Woollcott
LONG, LONG AGO
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THE WOOLLCOTT READERS
WHILE ROME BURNS

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CONQUEROR OF THE SEAS
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MARY QUEEN OF SCOTLAND
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HOLT

is delighted to add its amen to all the good wishes being voiced for The SRL in this issue. At 20, The SRL is an audacious youth with a wonderful record of achievement.

Books have contributed much in these years to the knowledge and comfort of a troubled world—and in the service of books there are none who have done more, or have done it more brilliantly, than The SRL.

Happiness is part recollection, part anticipation. Perhaps that's why we feel so good as we begin work on our new Fall books. Forgive us a tender look backwards. Here's a list of some of the books we've been priviliged to publish. It's a good list, *and all these books are still in print!*

You'll hear about our new books in the weeks to come. We expect to be visiting with you quite regularly from now on.

Publication Date	*Author*	*Title*
1918	*Beebe, William*	JUNGLE PEACE
1942	*Bemis, S. F.*	A DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF THE U.S.
1911	*Bergson, Henri*	CREATIVE EVOLUTION
1940	*Burgess, Perry*	WHO WALK ALONE
1916	*Canfield, Dorothy*	UNDERSTOOD BETSY
1942	*Cannon, Le Grand*	LOOK TO THE MOUNTAIN
1928	*Charnwood, Lord*	ABRAHAM LINCOLN
1932	*Chase, Mary Ellen*	A GOODLY HERITAGE
1942	*Corwin, Norman*	THIRTEEN BY CORWIN
1944		MORE BY CORWIN
1944	*Cummings, E. E.*	I X I
1932	*De La Mare, Walter*	THE COLLECTED POEMS
1938	*Dewey, John*	LOGIC: THE THEORY OF INQUIRY
1939	*Du Bois, William*	BLACK FOLK: THEN AND NOW
1938	*Edman, Irwin*	FOUR WAYS OF PHILOSOPHY
1894	*Ford, Paul*	THE HONORABLE PETER STIRLING
1939	*Frost, Robert*	COLLECTED POEMS
1942		A WITNESS TREE
1940	*Guerard, Albert*	PREFACE TO WORLD LITERATURE
1910	*Hamilton, Clayton*	THE THEORY OF THE THEATRE
1942	*Hargrove, Marion*	SEE HERE, PRIVATE HARGROVE
1932	*Hazen, Charles*	THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
1942	*Hooper, A.*	A MATHEMATICS REFRESHER
1894	*Hope, Anthony*	THE PRISONER OF ZENDA
1897		RUPERT OF HENTZAU
1924	*Housman, A. E.*	A SHROPSHIRE LAD
1940		THE COLLECTED POEMS
1890	*James, William*	PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY
1933	*Jespersen, Otto*	ESSENTIALS OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR
1938	*Leacock, Stephen*	HUMOR AND HUMANITY
1919	*Mackinder, H. J.*	DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND REALITY
1923	*Mather, Frank*	A HISTORY OF ITALIAN PAINTING
1939	*Odum, Howard*	AMERICAN SOCIAL PROBLEMS
1943	*Pyle, Ernie*	HERE IS YOUR WAR BRAVE MEN (*October*)
1940	*Rhine, J. B.; Pratt, J. G.; Stuart, C. E.; Smith, B. M.; and Greenwood, J. A.*	EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION AFTER SIXTY YEARS
1910	*Rolland, Romain*	JEAN-CHRISTOPHE
1923	*Rostand, Edmond*	CYRANO DE BERGERAC (*translation by Brian Hooker*)
1916	*Sandburg, Carl*	CHICAGO POEMS
1918		CORNHUSKERS
1933	*Schweitzer, Albert*	OUT OF MY LIFE AND THOUGHT
1939	*Smart, Christopher*	REJOICE IN THE LAMB
1930	*Smith, Preserved*	A HISTORY OF MODERN CULTURE
1943	*Spalding, Albert*	RISE TO FOLLOW
1912	*Stevenson, Burton*	THE HOME BOOK OF VERSE
1920	*Turner, Frederick*	THE FRONTIER IN AMERICAN HISTORY
1939	*Van Doren, Mark*	COLLECTED POEMS
1939		SHAKESPEARE
1943		LIBERAL EDUCATION
1933	*Waddell, Helen*	PETER ABELARD
1915	*Wald, Lillian*	THE HOUSE ON HENRY STREET
1895	*Wells, H. G.*	THE TIME MACHINE
1942	*Wilson, Charles M.*	AMBASSADORS IN WHITE
1929	*Woodworth, R. S.*	PSYCHOLOGY
1943	*Yashima, Taro*	THE NEW SUN

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Introduction

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THE *Saturday Review of Literature* has been fortunate enough to be conceived, to live, and to survive vigorously in three of the resounding decades of world history. Dates that are used to mark the ends and beginnings of epochs are often of doubtful value. But few now would question that 1920 was one of the vital years of American literary history, and it was 1920 when the editors of *The Literary Review* of the old *New York Evening Post* shaped the magazine that four years later became *The Saturday Review.* And in this fateful year of 1944, the tide of events, which always runs behind prophecy, has caught up at last, and thunders on the beaches of the future.

Through a glass darkly, it has been my privilege to watch from the observation post of an editorship the obscure but ruthless conflict of forces in these decades. And still earlier, and from another editorship and in the First World War, to see the last of the age of confidence, and the slow definition of the twentieth century American. It is my privilege now to introduce in this Twentieth Anniversary number of *The Saturday Review* a group of representative critics and historians, who will discuss concretely the quarter century of changing minds in a changed world which I propose in this introduction to describe in general and tentatively as it has impressed my own imagination.

An American concerned with books and their significance felt something radically new awakening in his own literature long before 1920. Our age of confidence, which reached its prime in the earliest 1900's, had never been fully accepted by the great American writers. Emerson felt its drift toward materialism even before the classic period of American literature. Whitman, though so confident of the future, was most doubtful of his own present. What troubled him most was precisely the bourgeois American's "way of life" which, once the Civil War was over and nothing but prosperity had to be taken seriously, threatened to become a substitute for self-development and idealism. Mark Twain reacted into bitterness. Howells was critical. Henry James, though pleased with the refinements which wealth made possible, was troubled by the failure of his sophisticates to succeed in their comfortable environment. Their maladjustments became his plots.

But it is well within the memory of many of us, and indeed only toward the beginning of the second decade of the new century, that the literate public which made an audience for good literature became dissatisfied with the light romance upon which it had chiefly fed, with only a dip now and then into the Dreisers and the Norrises who were rebelling against complacency. They dropped the fashionable books that had made so many fortunes and reputations in the last decades, and dropped them so quickly that many a good writer lost his prestige and his audience between one year's end and another. They began to read the new poetry which was full of an aggressive realism, seeking and getting there new emotional conceptions, and also the new novelists and essayists who were attempting to revalue and summarize existing values in American life.

The First World War neither began nor ended this growth of a new American literature. It merely accelerated what was already under way. And its shock to American routine was not so lasting as the evidence it supplied of the approaching end of complacent provincialism. By 1920, the typical American reader had absorbed the losses of the war, and was busy with its profits, if any, for him. His nationalism had increased but he did not feel a continuing involvement in, still less a responsibility for, the future of the human race. In this respect, Walt Whitman, long since dead, was still far ahead of him. But the sensitive breed of writers was more deeply affected. Those already established—the women particularly, such as Edith Wharton, Ellen Glasgow, Willa Cather, who were now leading in fiction—perfected their art, like flowers opening before a thunder storm. At the same time, a new generation with power over the word came to maturity. These were young men determined to make the new nationalism self-conscious. They chose the way of satire, protest, and brazen assertions of a new morality. It was the age of Sinclair Lewis and Scott Fitzgerald. While the women told the American story to date in a classic summary, the men, subtly or fiercely, attacked the apparently so successful present, addressing themselves to the young and choosing youth for their heroes and heroines.

But this is a narrowly American and literary description of the first part of this quarter century when *The Saturday Review* was beginning. More broadly and more extensively viewed, it was a time of prophecy and of sharp transition.

Now that the world is on fire and we fighting and burning in the midst of the conflagration, it is easy to see that even these American summarizers and satirists of the national spirit belonged to the larger category of world writers prophesying the end of an epoch of relatively peaceful exploitation. The writing was on the wall, but at first they and we read it in terms of reform rather than approaching destruction—even after the overwhelming evidence of the First World War.

As for myself, I can honestly say that I remained

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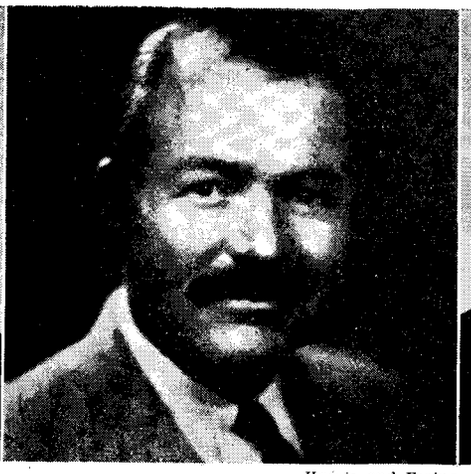
—*Ben Pinchot*

Thomas Wolfe



—*Harris and Ewing*

Ernest Hemingway

Sinclair Lewis

aware but unprepared—and thousands like me also—until half way through the quarter century. The pre-first war attacks on smugness and complacency which we called Shavian, or read in Anatole France, seemed to us the caustic preparations for a brave new world. The formulas for progress laid down by science seemed correctives for our hit-and-miss America, and their chief exponent, H. G. Wells, the greatest journalist of the times, never shook our conviction that God was still in his heaven and that all would be right, and probably righter, with the world. I used to talk in 1918 with the still obscure leaders of the British Labor Party, and that was how they felt. The First World War was half an accident and wholly an opportunity. We shall see the shape of new things to come as soon as the Kaiser is defeated.

WE did, but did not understand what we saw. In America, there was the great boom of the twenties, a fat but maladjusted and unbalanced prosperity, accompanied by a materialism more gross than in the years after the Civil War. Now it was not the predatory capitalist with a bad eminence of grandeur whom Dreiser had described, but the everyday American who everywhere was making money without deserving it, content merely to make and spend more. The novels of Sinclair Lewis gave us vague forebodings, but made us proud rather than discouraged. The fat oxen bellowed with rage at the prick of the gadfly. Such a country as ours would soon cure itself. And the new humility which followed the Great Depression seemed to confirm our too literary and too local ideas of the shapes of the future, at least for the United States.

More ominous and more broadly based, though far less interesting to Americans, were the books of fact and argument which, even before the First World War had ended, began to pour from the presses, though only scholars and editors seemed to read them. They demanded intelligent world coördination, they warned of economic anarchy, they described the weaknesses and the decay of Western civilization. Nothing effective was done about it, least of all by us, though dozens of books, even in the early twenties, plotted the curves of disaster. Dozens of books were proved to be true by what Europe called the crisis, and we the depression. Dozens of books were written and reviewed in *The Saturday Review* of the late twenties and earlier thirties arguing the almost inevitable approach of a new and more disastrous war. Nobody read them effectively. It was easier to blame everything on Russian communism, and go about one's business while Mussolini and Hitler wore out their boasts.

I was much in Central Europe from 1929 to 1935 and came back sure that at least a European war was inevitable. A new and anarchic philosophy of power over life was glaringly visible. Its methods were readily analyzable. Dozens of books recorded it—American as well as foreign—but their effect on the European continent was only defeatism, and in America and Great Britain, a skeptical indifference. A wiser mind would have reflected that this is always the history of prophetic books. The idea in words takes root perhaps, but never sprouts until the rain of events begins. And yet the sketch history of this war as it has gone so far, even to its technology and moral tactics, could be written with a general accuracy from the books of the twenties and thirties.

Whether this quarter century was transitional in literature was of little importance in a Europe fearful of communism, and under the deeper shadow of fascist conquest. The question was only "under which king, Bezonian?" Under which flag—the red, the swastika, or the feebly fluttering banner of hesitant democracy? Under such conditions art seldom flourishes. But America was still semi-detached and our now self-confident literature was not strangled by propaganda. The twenties and thirties in the United States clearly developed a power and maturity in literary art for which the distresses of the world at large were not responsible. American writers, feeling the strength of a continent behind them, matured as New England writers had done a century earlier. In technical skills the American novel exceeded any fiction written here earlier, even by the masters of the nineteenth century. Our satire met the new phases of industrialism, which we best represented, and gained an international as well as a national reputation. In spite of Proust in France, Joyce in Ireland, and the monumental Galsworthy in England, all of whose technologies were readily absorbed by our advanced writers, American literature, prose, poetry, and drama, was felt to be in a state of rapid becoming while other literatures as wholes seemed to fade. There was an interest in reading among the literate public such as I have never encountered, except in tiny circles of the highly cultivated in England and on the Continent.

IT was not a becoming—at least for the men and women who made this literature. It was a maturation—a brief classic period in which talents and ideas long developing came to flower.

When the new American generation took hold, for whom the First World War had not been an unwelcome surprise, but a youthful experience as natural as breathing, it was clear that we were still in transition. Even in the earliest twenties, novelists like Scott Fitzgerald, poets like Robinson Jeffers, story tellers like Sherwood Anderson, had shown those willing to be shown that there was a lack of confidence in more than the American way of life. Victorian ethics had already been sharply modified by the new realism, but now, with the younger men, of whom Hemingway

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Ellen Glasgow

—Bonney

Edith Wharton

—Nicholas Muray

Willa Cather

was chief, came an emotional reaction against what even our satirists had assumed to be the stable values of experience. To Hemingway and his generation, the fundamentals as well as the superficies of American life were unsatisfactory. A very typical American in spite of his neuroticism, Hemingway carried a tender heart into his exposures of personal unhappiness. Yet, like an animal biting at his wound, he began a cult of brutality, as if determined to break up our easy idealism, and find out what lay underneath. Obsessed, like the young Europeans, by what seemed the failure of all our conventions, he followed Thoreau's way instead of Hitler's, and pitted the individual against the state.

These new American writers were not only bred in a time of war, and so never knew an age of confidence, also they came to their full powers in the era of Prohibition, an American experiment as significant, if not as momentous, as Abolitionism in the 1850's. Prohibition, the last effort of a decadent Puritanism to enforce safety first in the name of morality, revealed the stupidity of the reforming mind, gave an opportunity to native depravity, split off the average American from the "unco guid," and left him in a kind of moral anarchy in which he watched, when he did not share, the excesses of the young with ashamed tolerance and a growing doubt of the ethical formulas which had served his own youth. What personal philosophy he had was beginning to encounter the wave of irresistible events abroad carrying over Europe a new and cynical religion of power, while at home he saw how near the surface and ready for release were the agents of anarchy and lawlessness. And very much of it was in this fiction by the oncoming generation, and on the stage and in poetry, though not now with equal power. Everyone read some of this so-called hardboiled literature, but few recognized it as a moral phenomenon. Indeed the most vigorous protests against its outspoken realism came from preachers and professional moralists.

These new books of the thirties found a new idiom and a new style, though style was the last word to be applied to them. Indeed, the prescription of the 1890's, "say it beautifully," seemed to have been changed into its opposite. Expression was the new word—expression, as with Tom Wolfe, of everything. Form was disregarded by these modernists except in the native American art of the short story. In fact, the novels, the few good plays, the increasingly minor poetry of the late thirties and early forties gave every sign of a new becoming, in which the hands of the writers were still uncertain, and their imaginations still not masters of their rich material. An exception for Stephen Vincent Benét, who brought the second classic period of American literature to realization and a close, only emphasizes that a transition was now complete.

THE world-wide conflict of political ideologies which had wrecked European literature as such did not much affect this latter American literature. The danger of this conflict for our nation was better realized in the poetry in the American tradition of Benét, than by the more rebellious writers. Something healthy and young and self-centered in their attempt to rephrase current America sloughed it off, not as irrelevant to thinking, but as unusable for the art of a country still experimenting with opportunities for all men and still confident of a vigorous future. A brief fling of proletarian fiction and propaganda poetry expired in dulness. One may guess that the new Russian literature, when it is freed, will show the same characteristics. Yet we are still in rapid transition. It seems that the two decades in which this *Review* has struggled, or flourished, and always kept going, have witnessed the end of one long cultural cycle in America, and the beginning of another. Which is one reason why our anniversary deserves the analysis by experts which follows.

Yet at this writing, it may be guessed that our fundamental philosophies of living have changed much less in these climactic decades than has been supposed. The "wave of the future" broke cruelly upon the rocks of Europe, but is already ebbing. The old values of Christian-Greek civilization seem destined to survive, which means that (surprisingly to some) they have proved to be true. But the data of experience has been violently and permanently extended, and the spiritual and intellectual climate in which we live has been radically changed. Like the American Constitution, the fundamental law by which we handle experience is being extensively re-interpreted to fit a world now seen to be not at all what we supposed it was becoming, even twenty years ago. An Emerson, a Whitman still speaks to us powerfully; yet we have to reply: "This and this you did not know, and could not have understood. Your principles unadjusted will release, or encounter, waves of events which never entered your imagination. You and others may have seen the shape of things to come, but the things themselves—applied science, industrialism, the might of armed depravity, the ease with which the guilty can control the innocent—these things are magnitudes of mixed good and evil, like Milton's devils, which require for their use or subjection a new theology."

It is not the duty of art to supply such a theology. Yet art, and particularly literature, is wonderfully adapted to be the sensitive film upon which change is recorded. The books of this quarter of a century have been only shadows of reality, but they have been prophetic shadows running ahead of the rising sun. And the noting and interpreting of these auras of humanity through two decades have been the service to which this *Review* has been dedicated.

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The Maturity of American Literature

BERNARD DEVOTO

SINCE Mr. Canby assigned this topic to me by mail I do not know whether there was a glitter in his eye. We have agreed, however, that I am not to continue here the discussion, if that is the word for it, precipitated by "The Literary Fallacy." He directs me to be reminiscent and personal. I therefore begin by asking you to give the "maturity" of my title a liberal relativity. In some ways American literature is still immature. In some ways it was mature as far back as Irving, as none should know better than I who have spent the last month chasing "Astoria" and "Bonneville" through the raw material that went into them. In our time American literature has not ripened beyond Howells, Henry James, and Mark Twain, or beyond Thoreau, Emerson, and Melville. Moreover, though the maturity we can all agree on is a function of the years between the two world wars, it cannot be neatly dated. The period's characteristic literature may reasonably be said to have begun with the novels which Theodore Dreiser was publishing around 1900 or with E. A. Robinson's poetry of the early 1890's, and before 1917 had achieved major importance in the work of, for instance, Lindsay, Masters, and Frost. Again such writers as these cannot easily be equated with, for instance, Hemingway and Dos Passos, or they in turn with younger men who made spectacular appearances during the early 1930's.

Instead of discussing my topic in the round, then, let me submit some notes designed to remind an eventual historian of the period of certain forces he will have to study in detail. They deal with the earliest literary experience of writers my age and up to ten years older. The historian of our literary maturity will have to explore the conditions that shaped writers of that generation. And, because our folkways send most young writers to college, he will be able to use the colleges as a fairly reliable index to the whole.

Mr. Canby is himself a sign of the times and so was the literary weekly which he began to edit (in 1920) as a supplement to the *Evening Post*. For Mr. Canby, a scholar who had trained himself in American literature, went to New York in order to discuss current literature, and he went there from a great university. It is almost true that only in New York was it possible to find any sizable number of people who were interested in current literature. It is altogether true that no leading university permitted a scholar to make a career of current literature or even of American literature. But there is an equal significance for our period in the fact that Mr. Canby arrived in New York at a time when both conditions were almost ready to abate. Within a couple of years the first was abating rapidly and the much slower modification of the colleges was beginning.

The Yale in which Henry Canby could foresee no future for his interests did, of course, provide a favorable climate for scholarship and criticism provided they were devoted to English literature of respectable antiquity. It gave us, for instance, the memorable books of Dr. Cross and Dr. Beers. But it accepted the gospel of George Woodberry, to whom American literature was at best only a pleasant brook flowing toward the majestic stream of English literature and acquiring merit only as it drew near. Mr. Canby got out to fresher air; William Lyon Phelps chose to fight on the campus the battle for American literature and contemporary literature—patronized by his colleagues and eventually damned as a popularizer by the literary generation he helped to enfranchise. There were great teachers and scholars at Harvard: there were Copey and Dean Briggs, there were Kittredge, Barrett Wendell, Neilson, Babbitt, Bliss Perry. Only Wendell had ever concerned himself with American literature; however, he had studied it as a now abandoned folkway of the Bostonians, and his approval never wandered far beyond the quincennial catalogue of Harvard. And at about the time when E. A. Robinson began to publish poetry a young San Franciscan registered for Kittredge's course in Shakespeare. He got out fast and he soon left Harvard: Robert Frost had decided that literature and the academic mind could not live together.

—*Frances O'Brien Garfield*

Bernard DeVoto: "Whatever else our writers had to get in our time, they have also needed knowledge of our roots."

AT Yale and Harvard literature was English literature, and advanced thought permitted its canon to include writers as recent as George Meredith. At Princeton literature was Henry Van Dyke and in time Alfred Noyes. Columbia was more cosmopolitan. Harry Thurston Peck and Brander Matthews brought Continental literature into the colleges, and more respect is owed them for that service than either has yet had. But, in spite of Matthews's own excellent fiction, neither was much interested in American literature.

Such was the climate which the young man who hoped to say something in prose or verse found in the great universities during the first fifteen years of this century. Moreover his councillors had previously been subjected to the same values. The earliest of the forces that shaped him has had too little tribute in his fiction or memoirs. Sometimes he was a librarian, and as late as 1920 or 1921 I can remember a disciple of one such, the infant Phyllis McGinley, lisping in numbers at the age of three and toddling down the steps of the Ogden Public Library with her arms full of Bernard Shaw. More often she was a high school teacher of English horribly condemned to digest Scott and Thackeray for adolescents. She was on the defensive and therefore fanatical, and she sustained against the philistines every restless youth who would read books. Let the eventual historian study her minutely for she was a principal begetter of our period. But her enthusiasm was seldom critical, and

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if to the young man who brought her ideas out of the back country literature was Kipling and often Conrad and occasionally Yeats, it tended also to be Mrs. Humphry Ward and Frances Hodgson Burnett and was beginning to be Hugh Walpole. He had these. He had Lady Gregory and sometimes Synge. He had Galsworthy and Ibsen and sometimes Nietzsche. Toward the end of this era he might read the *Smart Set,* which came to be very useful indeed, and the little magazines out of Greenwich Village, which did him much good and some harm. And he read *The Masses* and should have profited more than he did from its liveliness and irreverence.

Here let me turn to reminiscence. In the fall of 1914 I entered the University of Utah. It was then of about high school rank but it offered two courses in American literature, whereas I found only one at Harvard a year later, and it had in its English department two young men who were writers and therefore could not have been on the faculty of Harvard at all. (To be sure, they did not stay at Utah. With several others they were fired the following spring, on the stated ground that they had been inducing students to use their minds.) One of them—he has been dead for many years—wrote for the lesser magazines and the other was Charles Wilbert Snow. When Utah fired Bill Snow it became the fourth or fifth college of six or seven all told which found his blend of talent, inspired teaching, and radical political opinion too stimulating to be safe. Bill gave a course in which at least three undergraduates were interested. So I reached Harvard in the fall of 1915 well acquainted with Masefield, Gibson, Hodgson, all the other English poets we were soon to call Georgian, and all the young American poets who were publishing. Because a sagebrush college had tolerated a writer in its English department, that is, I reached Harvard with something which Harvard saw no reason to offer anyone.

Harvard, and every other college, should have provided for the young writer a few teachers like Bill Snow, who would sit with him and smoke and drink and talk about writing as something alive and current, craftsmen who would put their experience and enthusiasm at the disposal of apprenticeships. It didn't. The wisdom and kindness of Dean Briggs were infinite for any young man who would write honestly but the Dean was deeply, if always secretly, distressed by much of what he had to read as the winds began to change. Alone of teachers of literature Bliss Perry was sympathetic to the literature which by 1916 we could already call the American renaissance, but his interest seemed not to extend beyond its poetry. The one professional in the department, George Pierce Baker, was half frustrated—and, so his students reported, unsympathetic to the new literature or at least to its more promising half. The solitary course in American literature was based solidly on Wendell's textbook, seldom got into the nineteenth century, and never got past Emerson. In short, the young writer could not get at Harvard either a creator's point of view toward writing or any critical guidance whatsoever through the values, the contradictions, the fads and shams and controversies of the new movement which he hoped to join. Nor could he get what he needed even more, an informed, critical approach to the life, traditions, and literature of his own country. We were all expatriates; we had to be.

William Lyon Phelps

—*Bachrach*

Theodore Spencer

Howard Mumford Jones

AS a result, by far the strongest literary influence at Harvard was the President's sister. She jeered at "Lawrence's finishing school for boys" but she surrounded herself with literary undergraduates and by sheer personality and kindness shaped the first generation of writers whom Harvard contributed to the renaissance. Her knowledge was wide and her zeal boundless, she was greater in her crusades than she ever managed to be in her poetry, she was a strong wind blowing healthfully across young Harvard. But—and the historian will follow this thread far beyond Harvard and Amy Lowell—her disciples paid a tax in caprice, attitudinizing, neglect of background, and contempt of intellectual and technical discipline. Her judgment was frequently bad: for instance, it was she who fastened on American criticism twenty years of the howling absurdity that Robert Frost was a poet of decadence. She encouraged the young in an esthetic-ism they were already too prone to substitute for sweat and sinew, and the particular experiment which she led much as she would have conducted a military campaign, Imagism, was very small potatoes indeed. Her feeling about American literature tended to approach that of any Harvard professor: she had little patience with any of it earlier than, shall I say, "A Dome of Many Colored Glass."

Well, literary activity in the prewar colleges. At Harvard and I think the others, three groups could have been at least partially differentiated. There were the esthetes. They have had an excellent historian in Mr. Cowley and I hope he will sometime analyze them at greater length. They were an endearing mixture of Murger and Du-Maurier, of Huysmans and Dowson, of Aubrey Beardsley and George Moore. They were Impressionists, they were Symbolists, they were the *Yellow Book*

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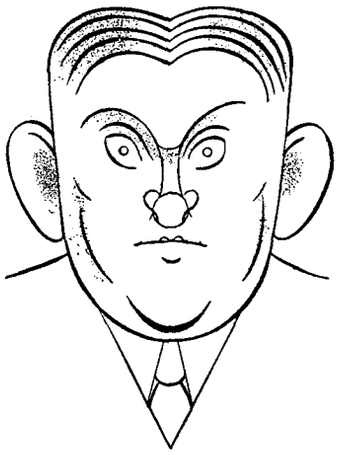
in undergraduate prose, they were an anachronistic, admirable, frequently comic attempt to enact their reading on the not altogether favorable left bank of the Charles. There was another group who have had no historian yet but could use one, for they and their counterparts outside the colleges have been important in our time. They modeled themselves on a different caste and part of Paris, the Paris of the Russian intellectuals who fled St. Petersburg following 1905. The poor-devil, classless student of emigré Russian novels was their hero; they lived abstemiously, laboriously, prayerfully, in the hope of a glorious but almost exclusively literary revolution to come. The young Harvard Huysmans had no doubt what art was but the poor-devil student read "The Kreutzer Sonata" and "What Is Art?," and sought to make ethics, esthetics, and politics so inscribe the circles Tolstoy was talking about that he would find it in the segment common to all three. He ignored the part of Tolstoy he has since come to admire most; however, he perceived little difference between the Marxian and the Flaubertian proletariats, and he joined Chekov in considering Dostoievsky a barbarian—all of which made for a certain confusion. Finally there were those who had found a quite unrelated inspiration. I suppose they were the most numerous of all, and if Chesterton was not quite a prime mover in the American renaissance, certainly Wells and Shaw were, with the lesser Fabians following close behind. Our historian will find "Marriage," "The New Machiavelli," and "The Research Magnificent" underlying much of our period, and he will find Shaw's signature on a great deal more. On behalf of us all Mr. Elmer Davis, in these columns, has acknowledged Shaw's influence on an entire generation. The historian will confirm Mr. Davis.

NOW this was all very fine but it was lacking a full half. It was excellent for the aspirant to have his mind ploughed up by such literature, to develop literary self-consciousness, to feel himself allied with strange and powerful movements. He would eventually have experienced less confusion and frustration, however, if there had been teachers who shared his interests but were maturely critical, and especially if there had been teachers to see him and make him see himself in relation to his native heritage. The young *fin-de-siècle* exquisite with weary eyelids (so truly pictured in Dos Passos's "Streets of the Night") would have profited from some knowledge of the American writers who had worked this vein before him. The poor-devil student's expectations would have been more realistic if someone had forced him to take Congress as well as the Duma into account. The young Fabian desperately needed to know a great variety of home products from the Oneida Community to the Industrial Workers of the World.

But the young writer's immediate elders who preceded him to New York had not found conditions much different there. During the first fifteen years of this century, journalistic literary opinion accused academic criticism of a barren gentility, and was quite right. But its own dominant mood was an equally barren elegance. In the end we are likely to decide that Howells and Frank Moore Colby wrote the best criticism of the time but both were without immediate influence. Perhaps the trouble with Colby was that he was never quite able to take his subjects seriously but Howells was in deadly earnest, a friend to young writers, and a remarkable prophet as well, and his failure is less easy to explain. Percival Pollard was much more an index to the time: a man with few beliefs, intense prejudices, a brilliant style, and a lackadaisacal, superficial intelligence. But the dominant mind was Huneker's. He had gusto, enthusiasm, a gorgeously romantic imagination, and a first-rate critical intelligence; it was, however, the defect of his qualities that set the fashion. Literature was exciting, it was mysterious and romantic, it tended to be esoteric, and it was never by any chance American. Huneker, ably seconded by charming emigrés like William Butler Yeats, in a dozen cafés and literary boarding houses off Union Square and in Hell's Kitchen (sometimes faintly mirrored in the stories of O. Henry—and, let us remember, those of Robert W. Chambers) was a kind of local boulevardier. They gave literary opinion a charming, fragile dandyism, too elegant and too dilettante to be helpful to the young.

The more staid opinion of, say, *The Nation* and *The Bookman* (both under Peck and after him), followed their lead. In almost any issue you will find thoroughly competent discussion of European literature. But when talk turns to American books it slumps into fatuousness. A profuse if usually patronizing praise is expended on elegantly lifeless tripe and the soundest work, since necessarily it departs from the narrowing areas of good taste, is invariably condemned. The truth is that the critics were like the professors; they were not much interested in American literature.



—Caricature by Eva Herrmann

"H. L. Mencken's influence as an editor was literally immeasurable."

SO that the truly effective influences on the dawning period must be sought elsewhere; they are frequently amateur or unliterary. The point about Greenwich Village was not only that writers could live cheaply there but that they could find others like them, interested in talking about their work and willing to respect it. If in the end they talked too much and respected more than was worth respecting, they may be forgiven. For the Village was a prime mover in the renaissance. On the one hand the new period was created by isolated men of talent and stubborn will, working doggedly without regard for one another but following their lights against the fashions and conventions of the time, men like Dreiser, Frost, Robinson, Lindsay, and Masters. On the other hand it grew out of the association of like-minded people for whom perhaps the light might have failed if they had not found companionship. At any rate, the Village signifies a good many things which our historian must explore: the little magazines which published much nonsense but also the genuine stuff which could be published nowhere else, the abandoned carriage houses and wharves where people who ended as novelists and poets began as playwrights and actors, even the *ersatz* salons of rich hysterics consciously slumming in Bohemia. He will note a handful of publishers beginning business on a shoestring and especially a group of painters. These last had found a purpose, a style, and an esprit earlier than writers did; they may have been too nostalgic and eventually too arty but they also helped the new literature into the world. Finally he will note the bequests to literature of the muckraking magazines, *McClure's, Everybody's,* and the like. The Villager acquired his theories about art by osmosis and from overseas, but when he came to look at what he was to write about, usually his own home town, he was Ida Tarbell looking at Standard Oil. This alcove of journalism gave literature an ideology.

All this, of course, meant coterie literature. If the term has come to carry a certain derision, that is be-

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cause of its extremes: experimentalism for the sake of experiment alone, miscellaneous revolt which was sometimes against things not worth bothering about and sometimes against nothing in particular, preoccupation with the infinitely unimportant, overconscientious attitudes, and a wildly comic solemnity of untalented, ignorant, and unsophisticated people dedicating themselves in the public view to careers they were by no means equipped to fulfil. Such aspects must be disregarded, for the important thing is that the coteries permitted people of talent to develop in a favorable climate, to find their styles, to acquire confidence and skill, to mature. The critical years are from 1912 to 1920, and the historian will note that then also the stubborn individualists I have mentioned reached maturity.

—*Bachrach*

Wallace Stegner

—*Johan Durup*

Robert Hillyer

THESE then were among our ferments and conditions, certainly not all of them but certainly among the most important. And by 1920 they had done their work: the period was shaped. A new generation had taken over the literary scene, revitalized it, given it new directions, new styles, and new values, and initiated the third principal period of American literature. By 1920 it had done some of its most durable work. I do not propose to discuss here either its achievements or its failures. The reader has probably been told that my opinions about the latter are outlined in "The Literary Fallacy"; if he will read the book he will find, as those who have discussed it in print have neglected to tell him, that the former are also set forth there. Also, by 1920 the movement had become national in another way, in that New York no longer monopolized it. Within a couple of years in fact Mencken was to assert that the literary capital had shifted to Chicago. Though he was wrong, as the principal Chicagoans demonstrated by moving to New York, there had come to be not only in Chicago but all over the country readers nourished on the new literature and writers who were contributing to it. It had spread not only westward but southward, and such magazines as *The Fugitive* and *The Double Dealer* were evidence that the Sahara of the Bozart had undergone renovation. This diffusion must be accounted a permanent achievement of the period.

As I have said, the colleges make a handy measuring rod. When I began my last year at Harvard in 1919, after two years of military life, of the influences I have mentioned above only Wells and Shaw were left. There was neither an esthete nor a poor-devil student in the Yard. Those of us who were being Continental modeled ourselves on Anatole France and Romains Rolland, but mainly we were soaking up the new American literature and trying to write like Mencken. About 1924 I was permitted to teach a course in "advanced writing" at Northwestern. Mencken was still going strong but a greater admiration of young writers, the man they imitated most often, was James Branch Cabell. Even then, so far had the pendulum swung, a necessary part of my job was to insist to unbelievers that there were other literatures besides American and some point in knowing them. By 1930, when I began to teach a similar course at Harvard, Hemingway came close to monopolizing the admiration of the young. He was more sedulously imitated than anyone else in my entire experience, and I had to spend much time suggesting that words of two syllables or more were not necessarily offensive, that a sentence might contain two verbs and still be righteous, that art did not forbid fictional characters to have mental processes. But his influence faded fast and by 1936, when I quit teaching, the young considered him as dead as Fanny Fern and just about as sentimental. They were all Marxists now but the proletarian revolution in American literature had developed no one who wrote well enough to inspire their imitation.

Such vitality and such contemporaneousness were impossible in the colleges when I and my immediate elders were undergraduates. They show how completely the climate had changed—rather how it had been changed. Today at Harvard there are courses in contemporary American, English, and Continental literatures. There are many courses in historic American literature, they are given by vigorous men, and more important still, a field of study called American Civilization has been instituted. The department contains such men as Theodore Morrison, Theodore Spencer, Robert Hillyer, Delmar Schwatz, Wallace Stegner, Mark Schorer, Kenneth Kempton, and Fred McCreery, who are practising poets and novelists, and such men as F. O. Matthiessen, Howard Mumford Jones, and Harry Levin, who are scholar-critics working expertly in contemporary life. These men make Harvard an almost immeasurably better environment for young writers than it was when I first saw it in 1915, and what is true of Harvard is true of American colleges in general. Iowa will even grant a Ph.D. for a novel or a poem and nearly every college has one or more practising writers on its staff, men and women who can give the apprentice writer what he needs most of all. Interest in contemporary writing and ability to write are no longer the professional handicaps they used to be—let the historian honor such men as Stuart Sherman, Norman Foerster, and the Van Dorens. (But vestiges linger on: a college president who lately asked me to recommend a writer for his faculty made clear that he had to have a safe one.)

IT is now the colleges that shelter the coteries, issue the manifestoes, and support the experimental magazines. The post-1920 or arte-shoppe phase of Greenwich Village worked westward to the Missouri and then took a long leap to the Pacific Coast. From there, like the emigration before it, it worked eastward again, and finally it took refuge in some of the Rocky Mountain colleges. They are the only abandoned carriage houses left on earth where we senilities can revisit our adolescence. And this sug-

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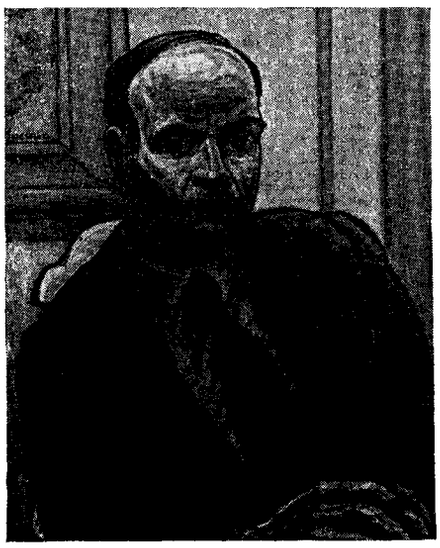
gests that the colleges may have gone too far and need to be cautioned. It is not enough for them to have writers and critics of current literature on their faculties. They must have good writers, complete writers, writers who have no need of an academic job to bolster their reputations, their self-confidence, or even their pocketbooks. Otherwise they will run to weak, insufficient, capricious talents. They will tend to develop preciosity, empty formalism, empty experimentalism. They will tend to become sanitariums for the half-literary and to develop in young writers the very faults which it is their duty to discourage.

The colleges, then, are one measure of how far American literature has matured in our time. A Henry Canby of 1944 would not have to flee them in order to serve his function; he could stay at Yale. Here let the historian take over, for, having made some notes for his first chapter, I have no desire to go on to Chapter Two. As one who has edited *The Saturday Review* and long been a friend of its founder, I am restrained from discussing its part in the years following 1924. That part has been important, perhaps most important, in that the *Review,* uniquely among literary publications, has never yielded to any kind of fashion whatsoever. Having said that, let me briefly direct the historian to certain other topics which Chapter Two must discuss. It was too bad that *The Seven Arts* and *The Freeman* had to die; they have been missed. I think we need not mourn *The Dial;* it published some good stuff, much of Sherwood Anderson for instance, but it devoted itself primarily to the follies of the time, it was a little magazine with a big bank account, and its service was to the semi-literary. There remains the *Mercury,* which the historian must treat at great length. Its virtues and its faults were Mencken's, his humor and vigor and courage, his sureness when dealing with pretentious or phony stuff, his inadequacy when dealing with any but a narrow range of good stuff, and his complete irresponsibility. He was a prime mover, a first-rate writer, and his influence as an editor, for good or bad, was literally immeasurable—and not the least of it lay in his kindness to young writers. Several hundred of them must feel as I do still. As a critic and a friend he did so much for me that there has never been a time when I should not have dropped anything I might be doing in order to do anything he might ask me to, and there was never a time when I did not furiously resent his distorting my stuff with the clichés of his own style and point of view.

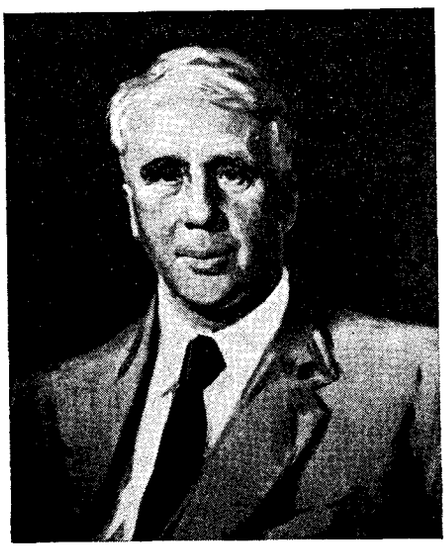
OUR historian's Chapter Two, however, and several of its successors, will have to wander a good way from literature in order to do its job. Whatever else writers have had to get in our time, they have also needed knowledge of our roots. Their refusals and their attempts to get such knowledge, and the barriers on the way to it, and the forces which broke the barriers, are an essential part of history. Here also there has been a steady development throughout the period, though it was obscure at first and has sometimes been subterranean. The Americana sections of great libraries would furnish almost as useful an index to the period as the colleges do. The historian will have to take account of them and of the astonishing proliferation of local historical societies. He will devote much thought to people like the Lynds, to various other sociologists and anthropolgists, and to a guild which has had little celebration—dealers in rare books and manuscripts, men like Edward Eberstadt and Charlie Everitt, who seem to one laborer in the vineyard to have a deeper and a wiser knowledge of American life than is easily encountered among writers and scholars. He will pay tribute to such publications as *The Journal of American Folklore* and *American Speech,* and to such academic labors as those that gave us, for instance, "The Lewis and Clark Lexicon" and "The Dictionary of American Speech." Finally there are the professional historians and the antiquarians who plowed earth too humble for their betters and turned up a rich, usable knowledge of our costumes, glassware, cottages, handicrafts, and outworn ideas. The historians, in fact, were on the right track before writers were; they have done much for the literary, and their ideas and results have quietly taken over more of American literature than has been acknowledged in footnotes. At the moment the professionals seem to be hardening in a new orthodoxy; the revolutionaries have grown old.

These are continuing forces. They are necessarily centered in the colleges, or more accurately the universities. God knows, they are not yet and never will be an ideal environment for young writers, but throughout our time they have increasingly served a vital function in the preparation of the soil out of which literature grows. They are far better than they were thirty years ago, and in that fact the maturity of our literature is adequately mirrored. Faulty as the synthesis may be, they nevertheless do offer to young writers a synthesis of learning, criticism, and trade apprenticeship far superior to anything his elders could get back when the world was young. By that token, we have come a long way.



—From the painting by Harold Weston
John Dos Passos

—From the painting by David Silvette
James Branch Cabell



—From the painting by Keith Martin
Robert Frost

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The American Novel of the Truce

CLIFTON FADIMAN

—*Ray Lee Jackson*

Clifton Fadiman: "If we make another Versailles, we will probably have another literature of disillusion. . . ."

THE current instalment of Pan-Germany's Permanent War Against Mankind will distort us, mature us, or perhaps, though not probably, ruin us as a people. In any case, just as we were not quite the same after Appomattox, so, with the ending of this war, we shall not be quite the same either. We are now passing through the second of our deep national traumata. Already we feel that an era has ended. We feel that, between 1919 and 1939, something is enclosed beyond the mere sum of a score of years.

The period's broad underlying political character is now discernible. It was a truce, a truce which the non-fascist peoples believed to be a peace. It was an interlude, not crucial, but *trucial*. What happened during it was not decisive, but preparatory. The decisions will come as the war ends, and after. Some of them, though we cannot know what they are, are being made now.

Like you and me, the American novelist of the twenties and thirties did not know that he was living in a period of truce. (Nor, perhaps, would he have written better had he known it.) Unless he had doubled in brass as a member of the German General Staff, he could not have known it. Quite properly and naturally he wrote about what he could see and hear and feel, unaware that he, along with hundreds of millions of others, was penned up between two parentheses of world history.

As we look back upon him and his work, we should fix in our minds the fact of this unconsciousness of his, and discount it; for otherwise much of what he wrote will in perspective appear sadly beside the point. He saw what he could, and it was far from negligible, particularly when we compare his vision with that of our political leaders of the time. Also let us remember that masterpieces may grow —think of Jane Austen—irrigated by not a single drop of the stream of contemporary history.

Yet, as we pass through our minds the hundreds of honest and serious novels produced between the wars, we cannot help but feel that many of them seem to have lost all relevance. Across the narrow gulf of a few years they speak so faintly to us. No, we dare not reread them, or most of them. With a kind of shame, as if it were in part our fault, we sense that the blood is drained from their once so vigorous pages, that their work is finished. We did not know death had undone so many.

Yet, bound up in their very mortality lies part of the evidence of their value. In youth they nourished us. They became part of us. Hence we cannot reread them. If they mean little now it is because they meant so much once. In their death is our life.

That is the primary color of the novels of the interlude. They were instruments of mental and emotional liberation. Between "Main Street" (1920) and "So Little Time" (1943) is included a national correspondence-school course, from which we who are novel-readers (a small and not particularly influential part of the population, it is hard to remember) hold diplomas. How much have we learned from this almost-quarter-century of the novel! The novel has, possibly without meaning to do so, instructed us in economics, sociology, sex, history, psychology. It has, through Hemingway, taught us new moral or amoral attitudes, and new uses of American prose. Through Pearl Buck it has enlarged our sense of what is common to humanity. Through Upton Sinclair it has given us systematic lessons in current events. It has shown us the existence of a South we might never have known. It has opened up for us unsuspected pockets of this vast land. Dos Passos has taught us what money does to us. Farrell has shown us what poverty and ignorance may do to us. A hundred novelists, good, bad, or mediocre, have dug into our history, and revealed what the textbooks have never vitalized. American fiction, whatever else may be said about it, has been a gigantic school with a thousand classrooms buzzing with never-ending lessons given by all kinds of teachers to a multitude of eager students.

I am not suggesting that this view of the novel as pedagogy, as utility-literature, is exhaustive. Still less do I mean to suggest that all our writers of fiction have exercised a classroom function. Some, such as Hergesheimer and Cabell, teach us nothing because they themselves do not really believe it possible for men to learn anything. Others, such as Thornton Wilder and Willa Cather in her finest books, have no value as instructors because their insights, whether they move you or not, are rooted in a system of thought and feeling that ranges far back of our small segment of the twentieth century. They discover nothing for us but the permanencies of the human heart, and these permanencies do not readily fit into even the most informal syllabus.

IN Alfred Kazin's brilliant "On Native Grounds" (by the way, you will do much better to read Mr. Kazin than to read me) he uses again and again the word "alienation." He uses it to describe his accurate sense of the curious uneasiness, the troubled quality, the dislocation that underlie the work of so many of our most influential novelists. It takes a hundred forms, this alienation, from the almost jovial satire of Sinclair Lewis to the direct savagery of Ring Lardner; from the gay desperation of Fitzgerald to the systematic hysteria of Faulkner; from the lyrical bewilderment of Anderson to the bitter, intelligent understanding of Dos Passos. Some fragile spirits—Elinor Wylie, for instance—felt so alien that they emigrated from their own time and place to fantasy-coasts of the past. Thomas Wolfe's novel (it is all one novel) recounts the history of a man trying passionately to find out where he belongs. The novels of Hemingway are experiments in strange citizenships—the citizenship of drink, of the bull ring, of the world of death, of the country of violence.

I do not mean that these men do not love and understand their own country. For the most part they do love and understand it, even when they castigate it, even when it terrifies them. I mean that they are all engaged in trying to love and understand a country which is irritating because the country itself is still, as

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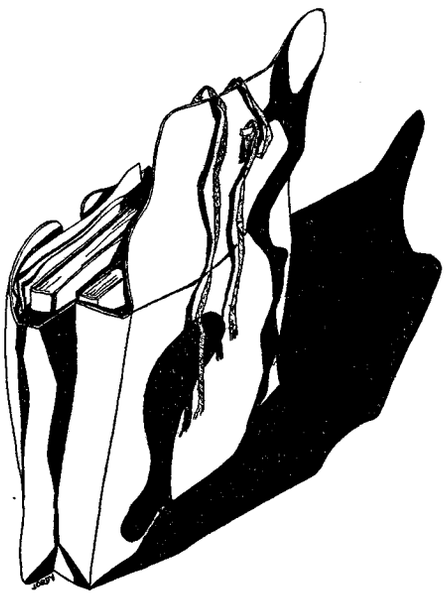
a nation, in process, in development. It has so few fixed points, it is not sure what it has come from, what origins it has rejected, what goals it desires to achieve. It grew painfully during the twenties and thirties; and the growing pains are reflected in the work of many of its novelists. These men were trying, each in his own way, to attach themselves to a culture that was fluid and uncertain, that fluidity and uncertainty being the very hallmarks of the interlude between the two Pan-German Wars Against Mankind. Small wonder that they often felt frustrated, angry. Small wonder that, as the interlude drew to a close, they began, as did Dos Passos, to reëxamine the history of their native land so that they might discover in it a guiding thread, a steady light, a center. Small wonder that a school of historical novelists arose who, whether merely retrospective, like Margaret Mitchell, or deeply reflective, like Howard Fast, were interested in finding out whether at other times in our career as a nation we were clearer about ourselves than we are today—or less clear, as the case might be.

Henry James felt this alienation—it was one of the mainsprings of his emotion. Melville felt it on a grand scale. Poe felt it almost as a disease. Whitman refused to accept it and made a passionate affirmation in an attempt to prove that it did not exist.

This country has not yet "settled" in the sense that a settled England could produce "Tom Jones" and "Pride and Prejudice." It is neither firmly outlined nor inchoate. It is in pilgrimage, and the outrunners of that pilgrimage are its poets and novelists.

IT is in pilgrimage toward something. But it is also in pilgrimage—perhaps only temporarily—away from something. That something is what we loosely call the European Tradition, the main body of thought from Plato to Maritain. Our novelists may familiarize themselves in their youth with this stream of thought—most of them quite deliberately do not—but it does not show in their work. (This is not true of all, not true of Willa Cather, of Ellen Glasgow, of Thornton Wilder, for example.) Each of them is a pioneer, trying out things for the first time. It is this pioneerism that gives the work of the twenties and thirties its extraordinary boldness, invention, and variety, a sort of barbaric strength. But it also reinforces in our novelists the sense of alienation we have already noted, the alienation that comes about when a creative class possesses no common stock of ideas and no unifying vision of history. It explains the contrast we feel in so many of our finest novelists, as in Hemingway—the contrast between an extraordinarily powerful and fertile sensibility and a rudimentary power of reflection. It explains in part why Thomas Wolfe is, as Mr. Kazin says, a Boy, always and permanently a Boy.

One of the ideas to which so many of our novelists are strangers is the idea of the novel itself considered as a work of art. It has been suggested, for example, that the proletarian or depression novel of the early thirties failed of its effect because its creators



were torn between a desire to expose the cancers of the American economic system and a desire to follow the Moscow party line. It has also been suggested that the proletarian novel failed because it imagined an audience (of workers) that it never possessed. I do not think either of these two notions sound. Many proletarian novels of the period told the truth, and told it without benefit of Moscow; and as for the audience, workers do not read non-working-class novels either. I believe it failed simply because its practitioners had no idea of what a novel is, indeed of what good writing in general is. They saw something (often something that was actually there). They felt something (often something most of us were too callous or uninstructed to feel). They put down what they felt and saw, and called the result a novel. They had a great respect for and interest in their material; but they had no respect for or interest in the diverse and difficult ways in which that material had to be projected if it was to lodge firmly in the American imagination. They wanted to write; but they did not want to write passionately enough to learn to write well.

This is true of the Chicago School particularly—the Albert Halpers and Meyer Levins who were so eagerly welcomed (and from whom, as I have said, we *did* learn so much) but who cannot possibly be reread today. It is true, though in lesser degree, of the best of them, James T. Farrell, whose bitter vision, whose exhaustive knowledge, whose firm understanding of his characters, are all rendered partly ineffective by his refusal to study the complex resources of the English language.

At one time during the thirties this fetish of artlessness was so eagerly cultivated that a novelist was considered extraordinarily fortunate if he were uneducated or badly educated. Publishers proudly announced that Joe Doakes had been a bus-boy, soda-jerker, hobo, machine-tender; that he had left school at twelve; that because of these experiences he possessed some special and rare quality. Often Joe Doakes *did* own a fund of raw material that other novelists might well have envied; but nothing in his career could possibly have helped him to become a novelist. I speak not of the exceptions—the Richard Wrights who have a mysterious power of learning from their very handicaps—but of the generality.

THESE strictures apply, though with lesser force, to the regional novel so popular during the interlude period. It was good that these regions should have been explored and committed to paper, so that we should learn about them, and thus enlarge our sense of what it means to be a citizen of all forty-eight of the United States. It was good; but it was not enough. The regional novelists too often tried to subsist on their love for their locality, their sense of the quaintness of its characters, their knowledge of its dialect, their feel for its private traditions. These things they put into their work; but no more; and so their work is already part of the American museum. I can best express this by pointing to a regional novel—"The Yearling," by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings—which was written by an artist with a profound respect for her craft. "The Yearling" is more than a novel about the Florida backwoods. It is a novel about human beings (and animals) whose interest for us lies in something far deeper than the color they receive from their environment.

The cult of artlessness found its most successful practitioner in William Saroyan. With him the technique of narration reduced itself to a series of ad libs, often amusing, occasionally poignant. He is not so much a writer as an improviser; and his improvisations pleased an audience that had perhaps had too much of the "serious" novel, and was willing to indulge in day-dreams and cute fantasies, pro-

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vided the author tricked them out in a "style"—which Saroyan, Heaven knows, did.

I believe, however, that the popular success of Saroyan's pure spontaneity is a surface phenomenon. The two decades, when you look them over carefully, produced an extraordinarily large number of writers who actually cared about their craft, and, more important, taught us, the reading-body, to care as well. The dominating figure here, of course, is Hemingway, who pointed out to us what language—and I mean the American, not the English, language—can convey in our time. Hemingway has written many foolish things. So did Mark Twain; but, like Mark Twain, he changed the course of American prose. All the sillinesses of "Death in the Afternoon," and all the sillinesses of "A Tramp Abroad" cannot alter the fact that Mark Twain and Hemingway are genuinely original artists. Both discovered some of the basic laws of American expression, and, no matter how either may rate in the hierarchy one hundred years hence, they will still be teaching valuable lessons to young American writers. And what is true of Hemingway is true to a certain extent of other innovators such as E. E. Cummings and Dos Passos.

Dreiser, Lewis, Anderson, and their generation discovered our country for us, and liberated us from certain of our taboos and parochialisms. Hemingway and his followers and colleagues discovered our language for us, and liberated us from the taboos and parochialisms of conventional English. We are now, as it were, ready to begin. We have learned in twenty-five years something about ourselves; we have learned a language in which to express what we feel and know. Not that we will all write like Dos Passos or Hemingway; but we are at least thoroughly free of the feeling that we must write like Thackeray or Flaubert. The declaration of literary independence has been promulgated. Now what shall we do with the independence itself?

—Caricature by Eva Herrmann

Sherwood Anderson

THE answer lies in what the war does to us. It lies in our understanding of the war and the peace to follow. It lies in the kind of peace we make. If we make another Versailles, we will probably have another literature of disillusion, as we did in the twenties; harder-boiled novelists, chroniclers of rawer violence, nihilists rather than mere cynics. If the war and the peace connect with what is best and enduring in the national character, we may produce a school of writers more searching, more thoughtful, more tragic (in the classic sense) than any of the novelists of the truce.

What will they write about? I do not know. Yet one can already sense the beginnings, not of a search for new themes, but of a desire to reexamine at as profound a level as possible, certain old ones that have been disregarded, that have been neglected during the Truce because it was not yet time for such reëxamination.

One of these themes we are forced to express by the overhandled word Democracy. Somehow or other, from Roger Williams to Wendell Willkie, America has produced a series of men all of whom say the same thing, in different language, all of whom belong together, all of whom speak for Americans when Americans are thinking and acting on their highest level. I submit that the theme they sound, the theme of human equality and the profound tragedy of our blundering attempts to achieve it, may prove one of the central impulses of the postwar novel. Already, in such minor but sincere and truly exploratory works as "A Bell for Adano" and "Strange Fruit," we see the beginnings of the working-out of this impulse. In the books of such writers as Carson McCullers and William March and Richard Wright, we note a desire to examine the dark problem of American racial tension without recourse to over-easy economic formulae.

—Caricature by Gene Marby

Theodore Dreiser

I do not think any of these novelists I have named have as yet attained any great stature; nor does it matter whether or not they have attained it. What is interesting, it seems to me, is not whether we are going to produce another Sinclair Lewis or another Willa Cather. What is interesting is the feeling so many of us have that our country, if this war is proudly and rightly won and a clear-sighted peace forged, will be ready to say good-bye forever to its adolescence. And when we have said good-bye, perhaps with some regret, novelists are bound to arise who will express our new and exultant sense of young manhood. They are bound to be stimulated and excited by the mere broadness of the new horizon created by the thousand-mile-an-hour plane; by the sense that the world is bound to become one; and by the confidence so many of us feel that, if in some future day a true world-fraternity is achieved, the democratic longing that is part of the deepest level of American life will have helped in some degree to achieve it.

Poet's Epitaph

By Alfred Kreymborg

FROM dealing with business men too much
The poet lost the human touch
He had before he was forced to sell
A poem or so to keep him well
In body and soul—or body at least
Since that was the part that played the beast
So the soul could exist and sing again:
'Twas this he sold to the business men.

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Contemporary Civilization and Literature

PAUL SCHRECKER

NO epoch in history has simultaneously so intensely experienced the potential unity of world civilization and the ruthless strife of the powers egoistically opposed to it as the decades sandwiched between the two world wars. The champions of these two antagonistic movements manifested their prowess in every field of civilization. Politics, economy, science, as well as philosophy, religion, art, and literature were divided between universalism and particularism. Their representatives, men of thought and of action, advocated either the primacy of humanity over the diverse regional specifications of civilization, or the primacy of the particular national or other group interests over the common and unifying norms of a world order of civilization. On both sides the contention often ended in paradoxes and even absurdities, neither the one nor the other being clearly aware of the structural relations which, more or less perceptibly, more or less firmly, more or less organically link every particular civilization, however wide or limited its immediate sphere, to the world-wide order of civilization and thus to every specific order articulated by history.

The universalists realized distinctly enough that history was moving towards the unification of mankind. It happened rather frequently, however, that they confounded unity with uniformity and, instead of locating the required oneness on the level of very general norms of civilization having the necessary elasticity and suppleness to allow of their adaptation in widely differing regions to varying specific conditions, they demanded that human conduct everywhere should comply with the same rigid set of patterns specified in almost every detail. Under the influence of widespread socio-economic doctrines and programs, certain partisans of unified civilization paradoxically emphasized an allegedly original division of civilization according to principles diverging from those exhibited by regional and national articulations. Economic and social classes and chiefly the proletariat, it was thus argued, had produced supra-national patterns of civilization; therefore, the abolition of the national boundaries and conflicts of civilizations would automatically result from the introduction of the proletarian class-civilization in every nation. Just as in the Middle Ages Christian civilization claimed its transcendence over national and racial frontiers and actually seemed, for a time at least, to unify the Western world by means of the common acceptance of a set of the highest norms of civilization, so a proletarian civilization was now to be endowed with the assumption of such a unifying function. And, just as at certain moments the ideology of Christian ecumenicity deviated from the paths of its fundamental norms and demanded the extermination of all non-Christian civilizations, so the ideology of a unification of the world by means of universal class-civilization was climaxed by the self-contradictory demand for the extermination of all non-proletarian patterns of civilization. Thus, for the alleged purpose of saving world civilization, a rupture was proclaimed with one of the most fundamental and essential norms of any mature civilization: respect for human liberty and dignity.

On the other side of the fence, nationalists and regionalists of all colors and creeds were perfectly right in contending that no civilization is able to achieve any historic reality, or to maintain its vigor, unless it is actually rooted in its natural surroundings, the scope of whose dimensions may be more or less extensive in proportion to the greater or lesser uniformity or variety of the respective areas and to the greater or lesser generality of the respective patterns of civilization. Since every act of work in a civilization has as its driving power a certain physical or spiritual need inherent in human nature, and since, to a certain degree, the satisfaction of any such need depends upon natural conditions which vary more or less radically, the specific patterns obeyed by human work must of necessity also be at variance with one another. Yet, what the partisans of regional particularism overlooked or voluntarily ignored, was the fact that, although the specific regional patterns of life and work differ from each other and thereby tend towards regional or national isolation, they are united on a higher level by commonly accepted norms and traditions, implicitly inherent in the specific patterns which are but diverse adaptations of an over-all order of civilization, to diverse natural conditions. And the particularists also failed to realize that during the last half-century the rhythm of the world's approach towards cultural solidarity had been rapidly accelerating, despite all the efforts made to prevent mankind from becoming aware of the ineluctable solidarity of its destiny.

—*Trude Fleishmann*

Paul Schrecker: "Every outstanding book published in any civilized country immediately becomes the property of civilization everywhere."

MAYBE the gradual actualization of this solidarity was the result of scientific and hence technological progress which caused distances to shrink and required ever-expanding markets. But it is a preconceived and entirely unwarranted idea to believe this technological unification to have been a primary cause, and hence to overlook the fact that its triumphant appearance on the world scene would not have been possible without the prior existence of a potential world-civilization. The ever-expanding sphere of influence of literature, science, and works of art, which rarely respects any national or regional boundaries, cannot be accounted for by the introduction of faster and easier means of communication or by the improved technological methods of mass reproduction. The phenomenon reveals mankind's preparedness to respond promptly to incentives emerging from the fields of knowledge and the arts,

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irrespective of their national or regional origin.

When, by the the end of the seventeenth century, Leibniz wrote to a friend: "Provided something of consequence is achieved, it is immaterial to me whether it is done in Germany or in France, because I desire the welfare of mankind; I am neither philhellenic nor philoroman but philanthropic," he was one of the last humanistic cosmopolitans in a world of growing nationalism. More than a century later, in 1827, Goethe coined the term "World Literature" to express a new idea which gradually forced its way through the decaying ideologies of national particularism. And today, every outstanding book published in any civilized country immediately becomes the property of civilization everywhere. Even the works of primitive or exotic cultures are no longer considered as mere curiosities, but appreciated as valid achievements in the fields of literature or the arts. Parallel tendencies are manifest in all the other branches of human civilization. Recently institutionalized enterprises such as international and interdenominational church conferences, or the reiterated attempts to establish an international language, bear witness to mankind's irrepressible craving for unification. In the realm of politics, the organization of one international order of justice proved, it is true, to be a failure. Yet, the effects of this failure served even more strongly to enhance the imperative necessity of such institutions. Even in the economic field, chaotic and anarchic as it still may be, world-wide solidarity and interdependence represent undeniable factors of cardinal importance.

It would, however, be foolish to deny that the obstructions compiled to impede the realization of a unified civilization were mainly, although by no means exclusively, devised under the impulsion of political and economic interests. Esthetic incentives, for instance, or more exactly a certain bent towards estheticism, often coöperated with rather more realistic motives in order to grant particularism primacy over universalism. Just as at the end of the eighteenth century Wilhelm von Humboldt endeavored to justify war by pointing to the eternal epics it inspired (a justification, incidentally, which would just as aptly fit parricide, incest, or treachery, since such instances have inspired the writings of the greatest tragedies), the particularists in every nation proscribed universalism and pointed to the damage the emotional interests of a mostly esthetic nature allegedly would suffer from the ef-

facing of local color in civilization. As a matter of fact, they were only trying to protect an apathetic and sluggish imagination against demands it was incapable of meeting. As to the political and economic motives of particularism, the violent and irrational means employed in fighting its opponents only render further evidence of the forceful elan which the conation for the unification of civilization has gained in our epoch. Trade barriers, for instance, grew steadily higher as the impetus towards economic unification, the very trend they were meant to stem, increased in force; while the ramparts of national power politics rose in a vain attempt to dam the irresistible ground-swell of mankind's consciousness of world-wide solidarity.

THAT these antagonistic movements should have manifested themselves most conspicuously and dramatically in political and economic conflicts, is merely a natural consequence of the structure of our contemporary civilization, wherein these two branches of human work have actually usurped the leading roles. Whereas, in the Middle Ages, unification was a function incumbent on religion, the system then predominating civilization; whereas, in the seventeenth century, whose civilization was marked by the primacy of rational knowledge, unification was anticipated as a result of world-wide enlightenment; and whereas, in the second half of the nineteenth century, at least the national elites were united by their common estheticism, the epoch between the two world wars strove for international solidarity mainly in the fields where the danger of isolation and anarchy was the most obtrusive and imminent, namely, within the realms of politics and economics.

It is only natural that under these conditions literature was hardly able to attain the influence on the march of events which, for instance, it had exerted in preparing the French Revolution. It had more or less to limit itself to the function of a parabolic mirror concentrating the radiation emitted by reality, and consequently it lacked the spontaneity and initiative which had helped to create the great literary currents of the more remote past. As an effect of this structure, the most influential books published during the inter-war period did not belong to the field of belles-lettres, but were historico-political works, fulfilling the functions performed in the Middle Ages by philosophico-theological, in the seventeenth century by philosophico-scientific books, and which in the later nineteenth century contributed in shaping the conscience of mankind by literary works such as those of Tolstoy, Dostoievsky, Flaubert, Zola, Ibsen, Kipling, Thomas Hardy, or Thoreau. The decreasing momentum of the esthetic factor in civilization was manifested, moreover, by the fact that some of the most portentous publications of the epoch, such as Hitler's "Mein Kampf," were badly composed, written in an extremely vulgar style and poor language; in short, esthetically not only indifferent but shocking. The decline in the impact of literary culture from the Communist Manifesto, or Bismarck's autobiography, writings of high literary standing, down to Hitler's hypertrophic propaganda pamphlet (the translations of which are embellishments, because it is impossible to render its original vulgarity and cultureless yelling into any civilized literary language), or to the pseudo-historical and pseudo-philosophical writings of his sectarians, further evidences the vanishing credit given to the esthetic factor in contemporary history. Even where the debased and atrophied esthetic ingredient still claims its right of existence, it has foregone its sovereignty and donned the livery of some political or economic tenet.

EVERY human craving, when its natural satisfaction within the norm system of a civilization is frustrated, goes underground and urges camouflaged fulfilment. Religious needs, for instance, if denied open recognition, are more or less precariously appeased with political or economic panaceas or pseudo-scientific gospels. The esthetic desire, always closely associated with the pursuit of salvation, has in a politicized and economy-minded civilization to be content with similar substitutes, made esthetically digestible by the addition of a variety of spices, of which psychology enjoys a preference, lending itself *ad libitum* as a versatile means of salvation, or as an alibi for literary non-valeurs,

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disguised in the garb of dignified and authentic up-to-date knowledge.

Historiography provides another expedient escape from genuine literary responsibility: by an artful legerdemain it substitutes its disposable reality for the differently structured esthetic reality whose emergence is expected to result from autonomous literary creation. The requirement of intrinsic unity, essential to any work of art, received but sham satisfaction from the foisting, in the place of esthetic unity, of the ready-made unity of a political or economic program, or of a historical episode, or even of the turbid conglomerate of an individual author's mental associations whose self-attributed unity is unwarranted, uncontrollable, and not realizable by anyone but himself.

The literary styles which emerged from this troubled epoch of transition exhibit the operation of all these diverging factors and tendencies, and are therefore difficult to arrange in any classified order. Styles are general patterns for the production of works of art, patterns resulting from the mutual syncretic accommodations of incentives originating in every field of civilization and welded into unity by the ardor of esthetic inspiration. Whenever this inspiration lost its autonomy and yielded to other than esthetic generative principles, the result was an eclecticism of styles which lacked the challenging power inherent in novel visions and caused literary forms to degenerate into mere conventions. It is almost trivial to note that revolutionary epochs scarcely produce new esthetic syntheses, but content themselves with putting new wine into old bottles; with the predicted effect: the wine runs out, and the bottles perish. The so-called industrial revolution of our time certainly confirms that rule.

But this slow revolution was not only and not even primarily an economic subversion. The deeper undercurrent, which produced it as a symptom, was the mortal conflict between universalism and particularism for hegemony in civilization. The styles of which the literary protagonists availed themselves, with very few exceptions, did not create new esthetic syntheses; traditional forms were rather loosely adapted to new contents, just as the painters of the French Revolution used to depict revolutionary enthusiasm borrowing the same conventional means of expression that had fitted the glorification of royal deeds or marriages. Nor was the task of creating new styles of literature more adequately approached by those intellectuals who, advocating world-wide fraternization on the basis of class-consciousness and the extermination of non-proletarian traditions of culture, followed the well-known pattern of "imitation by opposition" and attempted to produce a new style by applying in their literary works generative principles whose originality consisted in using the antitheses of vested patterns: what had been esteemed normal was now forbidden, and what had been shunned by established literary standards became the canon of a new orthodoxy in belles-lettres. Since the fight against worn-out clichés arose from political and not from esthetic motives, it produced no new style. But it entailed the subservience of creative writing to those political and economic trends which shook and sapped the totality of contemporary civilization.

IT would, however, be a naïvely inverted form of hero worship to blame the respective authors for the scanty grandeur of literature in our time. Every civilization excels in the field in which work is required to organize the satisfaction of the here-and-now-most-frustrated, and therefore most obtrusive, human need. An epoch absorbed in overcoming the anarchic state of the political and economic world-order, or in fighting fear and want, may be expected to produce such an order which will be its glory in the future annals of history, just as the epoch of enlightenment gloried in having promoted the ascendency of reason, even though its artistic achievements were rather poor. All the limited energy at mankind's disposal being devoted to the solution of its most urgent concerns, present-day literature, just as religion and science, must resign itself to the role of a weapon in the battle for security and prosperity and, for the time being, renounce the splendor and proud sovereignty with which tradition has been wont to crown its ancestors since the days of the Renaissance. Gradually the changes undergone by the whole structure of civilization during the past century bereft belles-lettres of this dignity, until the claimed self-sufficiency of the beautiful became an empty shell and was eventually discarded with scorn and in disgrace.

Thus the very structure of contemporary civilization accounts for the fact that literature between the world

wars ranks in the first instance as a political instrument in the widest sense of the word. Directly or indirectly, manifestly or implicitly, willingly or subconsciously, even the most unrealistic works, if they were not conceived as a mere escape from reality, have endorsed a side in the struggle for or against a universal order of civilization, an order which the political and the economic fields seemingly were most reluctant to accept. Seemingly only—because even those programs which most loudly raised and sustained particularistic claims, namely racism and freedom of enterprise, held their backdoors wide open to universalism and, as a matter of fact, adopted variations of the recipe for the unification of civilization through class monopolism by substituting, for the civilization of the proletariat, the culture of the master race or the interests of big business which were to be forced upon the globe; while the extermination of any traditions deemed incompatible with their own norms was, of course, not forgotten.

Pessimism, nihilism, acrimonious criticism of bourgeois culture, glorification of the common man's virtues, romanticized or lyricized variations on the theme of the decline of Occidentalism are some of the tendencies issuing from the fact that literature had lost its autonomy. On the other hand, the protest against a reality, wherein literature was doomed to powerlessness, frequently incited authors to withdraw into a realm of non-objectivity or sheer hypersensitive subjectivity in which they could isolate themselves and avoid taking sides in the acute struggles—thereby being negatively dependent upon the times just as are, positively, those who openly endorse a political party. Don Quixotes and Robinson Crusoes were reborn in countless novels, the former riding forth to redress social wrongs, retiring defeated by the overwhelming evil forces of the epoch (or occasionally rising triumphant, for the sake of the motion picture industry), the latter lying stranded on the desert islands of their own egos and there improvising new and solitary lives remote from the hostile forces of civilization and threatened only from time to time by the incursions of political or economic cannibalism. Few were those who, intellectually, morally, and esthetically, were able to meet the twilight of the old gods and the dawn of a new epoch face to face and, without indulging in untimely nostalgia or in utopian doctrinairism, to transfigure in their literary creations the very world they were living in.

Under the chaotic conditions of world civilization, which pervaded the literature of all nations, America and her

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literature occupied a privileged position, with consequent increased responsibilities. From the outset of its rise as a new pattern of life and work, the set of traditions and conventions dominating American history had gradually shaken off the hierarchical structure of its European heritage and supplanted it by a scale of workable principles, at the peak of which stood the demand for efficiency addressed to every species of individual and social production. Under the impact of this driving power literature took a more active and more sincere part than anywhere else in shaping the new structure of civilization; while, in the old countries, literature was forced to undergo the structural change of civilization, rather than to help create it.

INTEGRATED into the circulation of national life much more completely than any other modern literature, American belles-lettres also give a much more faithful and adequate picture of the entire civilization to which they belong than literature abroad, whose very compliance with—or wilful opposition to—traditions that have long lost their anchorage in the depths of their respective national civilizations, renders them unable to keep abreast of the rejuvenated spirit of their epoch. Hence not only will the newcomer to America learn more about this country's actual civilization from the literary work it has produced than a foreigner would derive from any other national literature; but the very growth of America's self-consciousness and awareness of being a nation and a civilization different from all the national civilizations abroad—though linked to them by an inescapable solidarity—must, to a great extent, be credited to her poets and writers.

Certainly, the advantage of obtaining an adequate expression of America's soul had to be paid for by renouncing perfect esthetic satisfaction. A new style which would simultaneously fulfil both these desires has not yet been created, though the dawning tradition modelled on the works of Hawthorne, Mark Twain, Melville, Thoreau, and Walt Whitman has already proved to be more than a vague promise. But the evangel of this new style will issue from American work and irradiate from here all over the world only when and if the principle of efficiency shall have fulfilled its mission to grant political and economic security, to the point where it will be allowed generously and broad-mindedly to relax its grip on the entire compass of life and concede esthetic incentives an increased weight in the balance of this nation's work.

The Literature of Ideas

JACQUES BARZUN

IT is my impression that the twenty years of *The Saturday Review's* lifespan have seen in this country a growing recognition of what the literature of ideas really is. I do not mean that there had not been any such literature in the United States before, nor that we now universally and accurately respond to books dealing with ideas. I mean something as simple as the fact that *Harper's Magazine* today uses as a running head for its book section the motto: "Books are Weapons in the War of Ideas." This suggests Mr. Max Lerner's imposing volume, "Ideas are Weapons," which in turn owes the effectiveness of its title to a series of movements and events that can be dated fairly precisely.

There was first the great surge of theoretical Marxism following the world depression of the thirties. To it we owe at least a familiarity with the term "ideology" and the oddly ambiguous feeling which it conveys—that ideas are important (for it is important to hold the right ideas) and that they are unimportant (for they are the false cover of crass interests). By now the word ideology has become current coin with a kind of plural sense: a monomaniac has *one* crazy idea; our opponents, who have two or more, have An Ideology. Meanwhile we take for granted the life-and-death significance of ideas and, note at once, like Mr. Churchill, when the war loses its "ideological character."

—From the portrait by Polly Thayer

Jacques Barzun: "We have come to like the taste of ideas, without quite yet getting the right 'feel' for them."

As the tide of Marxist theorizing and criticism subsided somewhat in the late thirties, the conquering strides of the Nazis came and reënforced our conviction that the whole range of ideas—from hokum to metaphysics—was indeed an active element in our lives, intangible and yet as potent as the invisible emanations of radium. Accordingly we began to talk of propaganda as the black magic of our century and we gave our attention to innumerable writers claiming to know the "source" of the ideas that were threatening or paralyzing us.

It seems fair to say, then, that in the five years between 1929 and 1934, things happened in the world which sharpened our awareness of the role of human thought. The very word "idea" ceased to suggest "whimsey" and came more and more to suggest "weapon."

The effect of all this on literature is easy to guess. Books dealing with "big" ideas, with philosophy and political theory, achieved a new kind of importance. They may not have been adequately read or digested but they were reviewed and discussed with a new fervor approaching feverish apprehension. Just recall the excitement caused by the appearance of John Strachey's "Coming Struggle for Power" in 1932 or Thurman Arnold's "Folklore of Capitalism" in 1937. More and more, the front-page reviews of the weekly book sections featured these solid tomes of analysis and prophecy, rather than the delicate work of lady-fiction, the volume of impressionistic essays, or the new translation from the Scandinavian.

It is true that nearly all the themes of our present concern were sounded before the turning point I have suggested, but they remained minor strains without echo. Take at random for comparison the recent and deserved interest in Dr. Hans Kohn's work on nationalism. Apart from its wide erudition, it adds little to the analysis and warning found in Carlton J. H. Hayes's "Essays on Nationalism," published in 1926. Hayes's book is in fact much shorter and more attractively written than Dr. Kohn's, but eighteen years ago its tangible context, so to speak, was lacking; the American imagination was full of other things; Europe seemed far away

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and Europe's passion for bare ideas was the trait of an alien culture.

The same relation explains why it is that we chose a time of impending war and social revolution to rediscover the classics. In actual fact we did no such thing: it was in 1919 that John Erskine started in Columbia College a two-year course of reading in the literature of ideas—to be exact, in fifty-three great books from Homer to William James. But it is only within the last decade that the American public has become excited about the grandchild of this enterprise in the form of the St. John's College curriculum, sired by Chicago.

It is not too much to say that in the mid-twenties the term "history of ideas" was something of an oddity. I can testify that in those days specialization in that branch of history was considered either trivial or eccentric, and it was not until a decade later that the subject "took" either academically or popularly.

THIS gap between pioneering and popularity is itself of great interest to the historian of ideas, for it disposes quite thoroughly of the notion that ideas are the automatic product of existing circumstances. "Circumstances" is a term covering such an infinity of facts that the finite mind of the observer is left with the full responsibility of choice and interpretation. This once done, later events, slow imitation, or belated hindsight gradually make us aware of the wisdom of the pioneers.

It is easy nowadays to see which thinkers of twenty years ago had the truest insight and what new currents they determined. Without pretending to give anything like a history of these shifts in our intellectual outlook, I think I discern four main ones —three substantial and one formal. The formal change is implied in what I have already said about the new popularity of the literature of ideas. This of course can only be a *re*-discovery of ideas in a new form. The older form was indirect and fictional. The new form was direct and technical. The men who said something about America in the 20's said it, for the most part, in novels: Lewis, Dreiser, Anderson, Dos Passos—one might add O'Neill without bursting the category—were, with Shaw and Wells, the writers whose opinions furnished the staple of intellectual discussion in the first post-war world. Compare with the impact of their criticism, the relatively weaker effect, during the same period, of "books of ideas" such as Lippmann's "Public Opinion" (1922), Mumford's "Golden Day" (1926), James Harvey Robinson's "Humanizing of Knowledge" (1924), Goldenweiser's "Early Civilization" (1922), Whitehead's "Religion in the Making" (1926), Bertrand Russell's "Education and the Good Life" (1926).

AS a further measure of this impact, consider a group of books published after 1930, which bear on the same subjects, each for each: Cantrill's work on propaganda, Van Wyck Brooks's "New England," Robert Lynd's "Knowledge for What?," Margaret Mead's anthropological writings, Maritain's theology, and Hutchins's sermons on education. The point is clinched, I think, by noting the simultaneous effect of the withdrawal of great ideas from fiction itself. Already in 1926 Wells had virtually abandoned fiction (in "World of William Clissold") and the new plays of Shaw, however suggestive, were losing their hold on the thinking public.

If a date were to be assigned for the shift to ideas *au naturel* one could do worse than pick 1927, and stretch that year to cover a few months on either side of its strict limits. Clustered together within this space of time, a number of remarkable works appeared which illustrate and inaugurate the three main shifts of interest I spoke of: Parrington's "Main Currents," Spengler's "Decline of the West," Beard's "Rise of American Civilization," the first volume of Ray Stannard Baker's "Wilson," Will Durant's "Story of Philosophy," Edwin Avery Park's "New Background for a New Age," Siegfried's "America Comes of Age," Charles Russell's "The American Orchestra and Theodore Thomas," Neff's "Carlyle and Mill," John Livingstone Lowes's, "Road to Xanadu," Peck's "Life of Shelley"—and Thornton Wilder's "Bridge of San Luis Rey." I throw in this work of fiction as an afterthought, for its early readers will remember that the fuss made over it was strongly tinged with the belief that the novel dealt with a problem in metaphysics.

—Drawing by S. J. Woolf, reproduced by courtesy of Time.

John Dewey

Taken together these books signalize a new kind of seriousness; taken separately they suggest three things: a new Americanism, a new attitude towards Romanticism, and a new concern with the uses of knowledge. The new Americanism was part of something larger—a creeping dissatisfaction with cynicism, debunking, and transatlantic bohemianism. Beard's two volumes—which I think we now tend to overrate, especially as regards their literary quality—nevertheless established the fact that the words "American" and "Civilization" had every right to be put side by side. There was in that work a deep sympathy, an ingenuity in the understanding, and a good will in the criticism of our historical development which set the tone for the later work of others.

Simultaneously, our maturity was being celebrated by a French scholar, M. Siegfried, somewhat drily and on the point-rationing system, but still with proper deference. Two years later James Truslow Adams began his important series of books on our national life with a very fair assessment of American business. It might be said that as soon as we felt in possession of universally true arguments against our past—the depression was one—we began to be fairer to ourselves. It was not long before Henry Seidel Canby in his "Classic Americans" reopened the case of the artist versus his native land, in a more judicial frame of mind than had prevailed before, and a year later Bernard DeVoto rescued Mark Twain from the imputations of weakness under which Van Wyck Brooks had left him laboring.

All this implied quite naturally the beginning of the end for the debunking biographer. One Strachey era (Lytton's) was over; another (John's) was beginning. To put it less frivolously, by 1927 America had assimilated, with the usual lag of twenty-five years, the anti-Victorian poison-gas attack which in Europe characterized the turn of the century. This was bound to bring forth revised verdicts on the men who shaped the earlier period, chiefly the Romantics. Mr. Peck's two volumes on Shelley was one portent. Hervey Allen's life of Poe, entitled "Israfel," was another. Both lack a certain assurance; but in Lowes's Coleridge or in Neff's "Carlyle and Mill" there is no hesitation about saying that the preoccupations of the Romantic and early Victorian

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periods are still with us, and the solutions too, however disguised. From these books it should have been possible to predict the work of Carl Grabo and Newman Ivy White on Shelley, of Trilling on Matthew Arnold, of Ladd on Ruskin, as well as the flood of "rediscoveries" in Romanticism which culminate in our own day with Miss Maclean's biography of Hazlitt and Mr. E. R. Bentley's excellent survey of the whole "Century of Hero-Worship."

Meanwhile, and likewise in 1927, Parrington was blazing a parallel trail. Though cramped by a crude theory of art, his "Romantic Revolution in America" drew our minds back to the current of practical idealism in social reform with which nineteenth-century America faced her problems of property, industry, and the good life. To be sure, doctrinaire Marxists were to say for another ten years that their master had been the first, about 1848, to discover "poverty in the midst of plenty" and had single-handed persuaded the world of this reality. But this was an unhistorical blunder excusable only under excitement: Parrington stood there holding the facts.

WHERE he was most deficient, namely, in esthetic matters, others supplemented him, and with a very interesting result. It seemed as if the new willingness to accept Romanticism brought back something of its catholicity: music and the plastic arts became subjects of increasing concern to educated Americans. That is why I listed Russell's book on the American orchestra as a forerunner, also of the year 1927. Music indeed blossomed last as an intellectual pursuit. In A. D. Dickinson's list of Ten Best Books on Art and Music during the decade 1926-1935, Sandburg's "American Songbag" is the only musical item. Since then, of course, works on music and musicians have poured from the presses, in parallel volume to the output of discs. We must remember that in 1925 we were all limited to acoustical phonographs and recordings, and B. H. Haggin's thoughtful guides and analyses—the best among many—would have been impossible. If anyone feels, by the way, that music criticism lies outside the "literature of ideas" he must survive with his belief as best he can until I catch up with him on another occasion.

In the plastic arts, certainly, no one could deny the real pressure of ideas, for Mr. Mumford's monumental works must confound the doubter. Through them we have been taught to see that line, structure, mechanics, traffic circles, public health, national economy, and the good life are subjects

—Helen Post

Lewis Mumford

Ralph Barton Perry

which grow out of one another like Russian dolls, and the biggest is simply the one that you choose to begin with. Though "Sticks and Stones" was earlier, I like to think that Mumford's unjustly neglected "The Brown Decades" (1931) is more truly the starting point of his contribution to our thought, as well as the right sample of his capacities. With its resuscitation of Richardson and Louis Sullivan, Eakins and the Roeblings, the book also belongs under the head of the new Americanism. We are now proud of our art and we know we are great architects.

Under the pressure of the most recent events, Mr. Mumford has made excursions into political theory and the history of ideas proper, in both of which he seems to me to dim his glories. But he is not alone in that error. The last four years have witnessed a steadily mounting exaggeration of the nationalist and intellectualist dogmas I describe. The "new Americanism" has become very shrill and exceedingly literal. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, as it were, intensified his "New England" thesis in "Oliver Allston." Mr. DeVoto in "The Literary Fallacy" outdid Parrington in requiring the artist to perform a social duty and one grounded in home soil. In music, public theorizing urged Americanism on native composers, which led to a scramble for colonial hymn tunes to be used as first themes. In painting, congresses of practitioners adopted similar principles by large majorities or listened to private vows taken against all painting that did not directly contribute to the war effort.

These manifestations reflect the third tendency I have marked out as beginning some fifteen years ago—the increasing concern about the uses of knowledge. In this regard, Whitehead's "Science and the Modern World" (1927) is an epoch-making work in that it is—for our generation—the fountainhead of all reasoned opposition to scientism and the source of all wisdom about the legitimate uses of science. Coming three years earlier, James Harvey Robinson's last book, "The Humanizing of Knowledge," dealt with the sociological aspects of what to do with what we know. Our current complaints about education, democracy, and the gap separating scholarship from popular knowledge come out of that book or reduplicate it unknowingly.

Of course, the great American who stands behind both these books and their successors is William James, and it seems significant that ever since 1935, when R. B. Perry's full biography appeared, James's stature has been growing. Numberless articles and books have "placed" him, and he has emerged from the cloud that obscured him in the twenties. For at that time Van Wyck Brooks's essay, which showed James as a rationalizer of success, was representative. Even John Dewey honestly felt in those days that James stood on the other side of an "impassable chasm." Today, it is rather Dewey's "Reconstruction in Philosophy" (purely scientific instrumentalism) that seems on the other brink of the gulf.

IN one aspect of scientific thought, the twenties and the forties show little difference. That is in the quality of their popularizations. Wiggam and Dorsey with their "New Decalogue of Science" and "Why We Behave Like Human Beings," and John Watson with his "Behaviorism" are about on a par with Mr. Lancelot Hogben's large and half-baked encyclopedias or

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Professor Hooton's assertive miscellanies. Both in the twenties and now, the true popularizations pass almost unnoticed except by those professionally interested. I am thinking of J. Arthur Thomson's four volume "Outline of Science" (1922) and of Dr. Charles Singer's "Short History of Science" (1941). The former was doubtless too large, the latter probably too good, for a public whose schooling does not prepare it to understand scientific discussion but only to gape at "miracles." I purposely leave out of account the works of Paul de Kruif, for they are on the whole biographical and our own decade can match them with the writings of Zinsser, Eve Curie, or Muriel Rukeyser, none of them really reaching the realm of ideas or staying there very long without loss of breath.

What then of the famous team of Eddington and Jeans? What of J. B. S. Haldane, Needham, and Mr. Hogben in his prophetic incarnation? Certainly the first pair have achieved one thing by popularizing the "advanced" hypotheses of modern physics: they have reopened the religious question. Their shortcomings in both science and philosophy are not here in point. Public opinion has simply grasped the fact that the meaning of religion and ethics lies outside the scope of physical science. Reënforced by human sufferings on a world-wide scale, this permission to believe has made it once again possible to give respectful attention to theologians—the neo-Thomists on the one hand; the neo-Protestants from Kierkegaard to Niebuhr and Kroner on the other; with T. S. Eliot and Dorothy Sayers in between. It is almost a religious revival, with a distinct bearing on the re-assessing of the Romantic Movement.

The second group of scientific philosophers brings us back to social criticism. For them, and particularly for the renegade idealist Haldane, science, with Marxism attached, is supreme director of human effort. And that effort is to be concentrated chiefly on material improvement—which is simply harking back to the "World of William Clissold" via the technocrats, only with a special form of government in view. Concretely, it means the Managerial Revolution outlined by Mr. Burnham. More than that, this notion of the world being run by the force of a single idea is at bottom Spengler's thesis. Each culture has a form, and the history of that form is predestined. Spengler did not invent this formula, he simply prescribed it for the use of the post-war generation, and we are still chewing the pill.

The Nazis swallowed the dose gingerly, and it was left for many writers on this side of the Atlantic to make the most of it, often in ignorance of its source. Need I name more than Mr. Stace's "Destiny of Western Man" (1942), Mr. Rader's "No Compromise" (1939), Mr. McGovern's "From Luther to Hitler" (1941), in order to characterize a whole class of books based on the premise that two radically opposed notions were battling for supremacy, one of which was the true and only form of our ancestral culture?

IN these exposés, philosophy, art, history and religion were turned to the immediate uses of persuasion—often at the cost of accurate nuance and even fair play. This was "sociologizing" knowledge with a vengeance and it made one freshly value the arguments in "The Usefulness of Useless History," by Robert L. Schuyler, himself a colleague and continuator of James Harvey Robinson. But the flood of Spenglerian prophecy seems far from receding. Week by week, the reviews bring to our attention the latest historical summary of whence we came and whither we are going. In each story, quite in keeping with the sway we accord to ideas, the villain and the hero are abstract: it is the Market, the Cartel, or Labor. Groups of events themselves are first abstracted and then personified: the Reformation, the French Revolution, the World War. In form, there is little to choose among these home-made abstractions and those we profess to scoff at: the master-race, geopolitics, or the Slavic soul.

Altogether, it is the exaggerated phase of the "humanizing of knowledge." We have come to like the taste of ideas, without quite yet getting the right "feel" for them. With the aid of some masterworks, issued just before the depression, we have passed from fiction and whimsey to history of ideas and solemnity. We are not as yet free-moving spirits in this new dimension, that is to say, not yet quite mature.

Low Country

By Josephine Johnson

EVER the ocean tides, slipping between the islands,
shaking the piers, shaking the old palmetto
posts where the barnacles cling—
leaving a scrawl on the beaches, leaving the bright staccato
scuttling of crabs. Turning again to swing
out through the shoal-green reaches.

Islands lying like fruit, strewn out beyond the shoreline,
fruit of the sea—softly bloomed with sea-cotton,
husked with saw grass—pale in the noonday glimmer
shimmer in indolent beauty, still as the strong are still;
savage at heart, intent on a primal will,
deaf to entreaty.

Mosses drip from the trees. Embraces of grey-beards
would strangle the surgent green where pine and juniper rip
through tangles of vine and creeper. Live oaks stir,
shake their great limbs, and the air is spattered with light
as a swimmer scatters bright drops. The cypress, at ease,
hunches his bony knees in the dark swamp water.

Fecund and beautiful land! Tenacious, intent, and sufficing,
where life flows on in a rhythm of tides and seasons,
what do they know of death when the gulf winds rising
fumble along these coasts, and the turtle stumbles
heavy with eggs, while out of his ghostly skin
the moccasin ripples, thin as a damask blade?

The altar may lie untended, the censer broken,
the ritual lost—but ever the estuary
throbs with an ageless pulse. In the heart of the swamp
life is burning and wary. April has spoken,
Churning his foaming ring
out of the reeking damp the bull alligator
bellows of spring!

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The Language of Hollywood

JAMES T. FARRELL

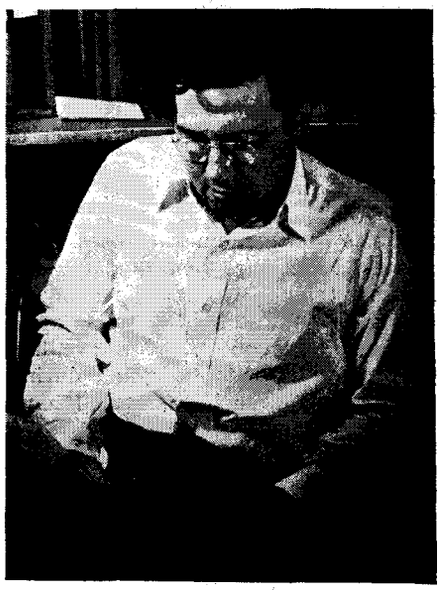
IN America, a tremendous commercial culture has developed as a kind of substitute for a genuinely popular, a genuinely democratic culture, which would recreate and communicate how the mass of the people live, how they feel about working, loving, enjoying, suffering, and dying. This culture has become a big business. It is capitalized at hundreds of millions of dollars, returns many millions in annual profits, rent, and interest, and employs thousands of men and women to whom it pays additional millions more in wages and salaries. At times, the apologists and propagandists for the cultural industries proudly boast of the "cultural" achievements of these industries: on other occasions, however, they assert that these industries produce entertainment, not culture. Let us not quibble over words. The products of these industries (motion pictures, songs, radio plays and soap operas, cartoons, and so on) recreate images of life: they communicate feelings, no matter how banal these may be; they externalize reveries; they fix ideals; they embody and illustrate moral attitudes; they create tastes which in turn influence how objects are regarded—in brief, directly and by lesson, suggestion, innuendo, fable, story, they tell huge masses of people how and what to believe. If the performance of such functions be described as something other than cultural, then the plain meaning of words is being inexcusably debased.

Usually, the debates concerning these industries—and most especially the motion picture industry—are concerned with the problem of commercial versus artistic values. Critics of the motion picture industry generally claim that pictures are not artistic enough; their adversaries then reply that pictures are as artistic as they can be made, considering the fact that they must be produced for a profit. The claim that the function of pictures is to produce entertainment serves as a justification of the simple and the admitted fact that the fundamental purpose of the motion picture studios is to make money. Not only in motion picture studios, but also in the offices of publishers and theatrical producers, a very common reason for the rejection of many books and scripts is that these do not promise to return a profit.

All this is common knowledge. It is clear that business considerations play a decisive role in all these fields.

The laws of commodity production have governed the production and distribution of cultural objects ever since bourgeois society superseded feudal society. The fall of feudal society, the rise of bourgeois society, established the system of commodity production over that of the patronage system in the field of culture. While it is true that many great works of art of the past were not created to be manufactured and sold as commodities, it is nevertheless true that they were manufactured and sold as such. We see this in literature. Most of the truly great literary artists of recent centuries wrote works with the idea that these would be sold as commodities. Thus, Balzac, Dostoievsky, Tolstoy (until he renounced his copyrights), and many others had their books sold as commodities. The best literature of our own day is also sold as a commodity. Therefore, while it is true that the laws of commodity production and distribution play a governing role in the production and distribution of cultural products, the analysis of the way that these laws operates needs to be made in terms of specific times, specific conditions and periods. We will gain little in understanding if we merely protest the harmful effects of capitalism on culture in general, in the abstract. Art which we call good, art which we call bad, art which we call counterfeit—all this is sold on the commodity market. Due to basic economic causes, something of the most profound significance has happened in American culture: it has been invaded by finance capital. American commercial culture is owned and operated by finance capital.

THE motion picture industry is dominated by a few huge studios; the same is the case in radio. The success of *Reader's Digest* and the Luce publications reveals the same tendency triumphing in journalism. Some of the consequences of this fact must be noted. It is seemingly paradoxical but true that the bigger a corporation producing for the consumer market, the more must it depend on good will. The profits of huge concerns are vitally affected by the falling rate of profits: in time the more units of a commodity sold, the lower is the percentage of profit per unit. Inasmuch as the rate of profit falls as the volume of sales increases, there is a driving necessity that the market be expanded. This, in turn, demands the creation and retention of more and ever more good will. Here, we see a major reason why the Hollywood studio can permit less freedom in the treatment of subject than the Broadway producer; he, in turn, can allow less freedom than the book publisher. The bigger our cultural industries become, the greater are the restrictions they must impose on the choice and the handling of subject matter. Also, their costs of production are staggering and, to repeat, their rate of profit falls. These economic necessities dominate all else. The aims, the tastes of the men controlling the industries must be harmonized with them. One producer may be more sincere, more artistic than another. But all must adjust themselves; all must work within this system. It allows relatively little real individualism of taste, daring, experiment. One act of daring experiment and bold honesty may cost a million dollars. Similar actions by book publishers can be more easily sustained because the risks are not as great. Those who really control the studios are big capitalists. They think and act according to their class interests. It is folly to expect them wilfully to produce art (and even to lose money on it) that will endanger their class interest. Honest art often threatens that interest. This means that there is a double restriction imposed on the character of what is produced in motion picture. Besides promising a profit, a picture must not seriously threaten the class interests of the owners.



J. T. Farrell: "What characterizes almost all Hollywood pictures is their inner emptiness."

Genuine works of art have something new and individual to convey. They reveal new aspects of life, of human feeling. They make us conscious of what had been hitherto hidden, concealed, not clearly grasped in our own consciousness. To assimilate

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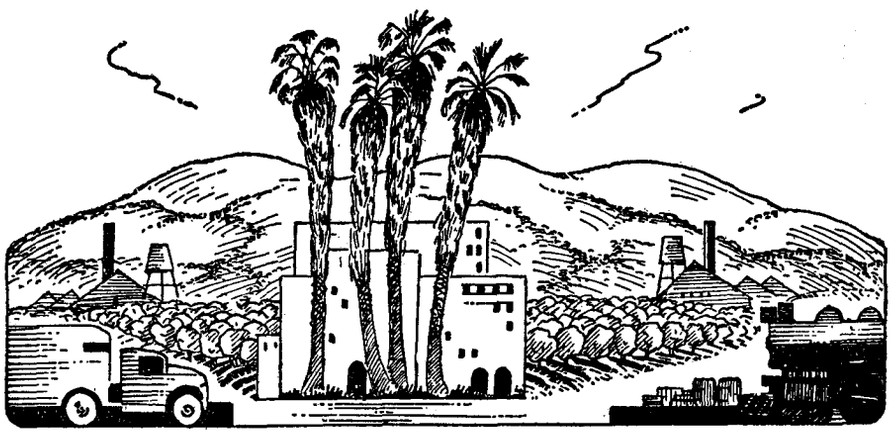
them is painful, disturbing, difficult; we must make an effort; we must expand our boundaries of feeling, thinking. Growth and assimilation are almost always painful, disturbing, demanding. For we are then forced to change, to alter the force of habit. It is a truism that in a shoddy culture shoddy art generally gains quicker acceptance than genuine art does. And, as Karl Marx once remarked acutely, that capitalism lives for the moment. The time required for the assimilation of new, more honest, more revealing pictures would be too long and, during that period, large losses would have to be sustained.

Now and then, it may happen that a good picture is produced. This is exceptional, often accidental. Usually, bad pictures are produced. Here is the explanation of why this is the case. The aim of the studios is to get a return on investment, and to get profits, rent, and interest. If returns on investment, profits, rent, and interest permit the studios to produce great art, then, and *then only,* will they do it; otherwise, the artistic values, the truth values embodied in pictures are and will remain merely secondary. In order to be a business man in this system, you must do what business requires; in order to be an artist, you must meet the demands and responsibilities required by art. An artist must be sincere, honest, clear, and for his work he must draw on his own inner life and inner tensions. A business man must stay in business. *Q.E.D.!*

MY analysis can be extended to encompass the economic relationships which play an important role in other fields of culture, as well as in the motion picture industry. I use the latter as an illustration. Hollywood is not a cause; it is a consequence. And it reveals tendencies now at work in American culture with such relative purity that it serves me as a most illuminating illustration of what I want to convey. The rise of Hollywood to the realm of culture is a phenomenon analogous to that of the triumph of machine production during the industrial revolution. In the studios many separate crafts and arts are all linked together, mainly under one roof in one serial process. And this requires a huge capital investment. In other words, we find the division of labor: this means that we have social methods of production carried on for private profits. But those who contribute to this production do not (with rare exceptions) control it. They lose their independence as artists and craftsmen, and becomes employes. Their economic relationships thereby change. Most writers, for instance, become the wage-working writer. It is true that their wages are generally fantastically higher than those of factory workers, but this is not the decisive factor here. In the economic sense, most writers have a relationship to their employers similar to that of the factory workers to his boss. Just as the worker sells his labor power, so does the writer sell his skill and talent. What he then receives is a wage. All control over the product of his work resides in the employer. Thus, the writer suffers from the same kind of alienation, the same kind of self estrangement, as does the factory worker. He is alienated, self estranged from control over his means of production, and over what he produces.

And there is a singular character to the alienation of the writer. His real means of production is his skill, his feelings, his needs which feed his work, his way of seeing life; in other words, his real means of production is his soul. This is what he sells. As a consequence of his economic relationships, the writer may write what he feels and wants to write, only if his employer allows him to do so. But he does not determine whether he will or will not do this.

Culture, art, is the most powerful means invented by mankind for preserving the consciousness of civilized man. It externalizes and communicates that in human life which is most important—man's inner life. But here, the writer who plays the role of the artist, who is ostensibly the creator, sells his very ability to create as a commodity. There is a clear-cut difference between freely creating out of inner need and then selling the creation, and selling the very faculty of creating instead of the results of that creation. The writer may thus write out of his inner self, only when his own needs, feelings, and attitudes coincide with the demands of his employer. The nature of these demands have already been uncovered in this analysis. Under such conditions, free creation is not a conscious act of will; it is merely accidental, coincidental. Such being given it is, however, not accidental that so many Hollywood writers, once they become inured to their work, reveal a retrogression in consciousness. When they write they cannot fully draw on their needs and emotions. Much of their writing is reduced to the level of literary carpentering. They are fettered. And the fettered consciousness must retrogress. Here is the real situation. Here is the essential mechanics concerning how they who should be artists are turned into mere purveyors of entertainment. Let each make what he can of this situation in accordance with his values, his moral outlook, and with what he wants in life for himself, and for his fellow man.



JUST as there is a huge investment capital in the production end of the industry, so is there in its distribution end. America (the world in fact) is almost glutted with motion picture theatres, each of which also must return its profit, its rent, its interest. In many instances, these are also organized into chains. Taken together they constitute a huge and voracious mouth forever crying for commodities to be consumed. And they must be fed. They must stay open; they must have customers parading continually to the box office. The studios must supply them. Halt this flow of commodities and bankruptcies will follow. This need, more than any other, conditions the production schedules of the studios. Gigantic blocs of capital are involved in the total structure of the industry. Consequently, it must find the widest possible market. This means, the largest possible audience is necessary. Such an audience can be only a most heterogeneous one, encompassing all age, emotional, and mental levels. Such an audience will alone permit this industry to continue. There is no time to waste in educating the tastes of this audience. That would be too costly. Staple commodities based on the lowest common denominator of the mentality and the emotional life of the audience must be produced. Staple commodities in art, produced in this way, and in order to meet such requirements must mean, in the main, counterfeit art. This is the decisive reason why the masses of the Ameri-

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can people really "need" so much Hollywood "entertainment."

Actually, the motion picture industry needs the money of the American masses much more than they need its entertainment. We get, thus, an endless barrage of Hollywood publicity, of Hollywood advertising which almost batters the intelligence of the nation into insensibility. Hollywood must do this in order to give the public what Hollywood wants it to want. The audience cannot directly choose. It is not given proper alternatives. Usually, it may choose one of various absurd pictures, or none of them at all. When choice is so restricted, it is meaningless to argue that the public really gets what it wants. Also, the contradictions which we have observed in the motion picture industry are apparent in American society as a whole. The conditions of American life create alienated and truncated personalities, a fact which has already engaged the attention of more than one generation of sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, judges, social workers, and others. The conditions of earning one's bread in this society create the self-estranged modern man.

IT is such conditions which explain the need, sometimes feverish, for an entertainment which so repetitively presents the same reveries, the same daydreams, the same childish fables of success and happiness. So much of the inner life of men is dried up that they tend to become filled with yearnings and to need the consolation of these reveries about people who are happy, healthy, and who always succeed. Tastes are thus conditioned. Increasingly deprived of proper alternatives from which to choose, the American masses have also become habituated to this taste for the movies. The movies have, thereby, become a social habit. The kind of profitable commercial culture which we now have would have demanded conditions which would aid in the creation of the necessary audience. The two have developed more or less harmoniously. Hence, parallel to the retrogression of consciousness in, say, the Hollywood writer, there is a more widespread and also more pernicious retrogression of consciousness in the motion picture audience. Social and economic conditions have established the basis for this; the motion picture further enforces it. But such a process can continue only so far. Eventually a limit must and will be reached. Eventually, there will be a profound revulsion of popular taste. But this will depend not only on the audience being saturated with what it is given; more than this, it will depend on fundamental changes which are economic, political, and social in character.

Most motion pictures enervate rather than energize. They distract the masses of the people from more clearly becoming aware of their real moral, esthetic, spiritual needs; in other words, they distract from what are the real and most important problems of life. As such, they offer what William James aptly characterized as "a moral holiday." Moral holidays are necessary, but when so much time is used up in a nation in having these moral holidays, we have a social problem to define. The gap between the realities of life in our time, and the way that these are represented on the screen is a wide one. However, the masses of the people do not lose their real needs merely because these are not fulfilled in motion pictures.

It should now be clear that this commercial culture is a safety valve. Here, I offer in opposition to the conceptions, the apologetics, the theorizations of such a culture, a different idea of what a culture should do. It should help to create those states of consciousness, of awareness of oneself, of others, and of the world, which aid in making people better, and in preparing them to make the world better. Hollywood films usually have the precisely opposite effect; most of them make people less aware, or else falsely aware. This is, to me, the sense in which Hollywood films do not fulfil the real cultural needs of the masses of the people. For really to try and achieve that, one must not merely envision them as they were in the past, and as they are now; one must also envision them as they might be; one must establish as a premise their great potentiality. In other words, one must think in terms of the future as well as of the past and of the present. Such a premise is essential if one has the ideal of a culture that is truly human, a culture that is truly free. Here, in essence, is the great ideal of a free, a human, a socialist culture expressed by Friedrich Engels when he spoke of the possibility of mankind escaping from the kingdom of necessity, and entering the kingdom of freedom.

The content of motion pictures is so familiar that it need not be analyzed here in great detail. The values which pictures generally emphasize are those of rugged individualism. The lessons which they inculcate are those which imply that the world we have, and have had, is the best of all possible worlds. The major qualities embodied in most motion picture heroes are those of the pioneer, plus those of the present which are either consistent with the practices, the standards, the mores of bourgeois America, or are else in no vital contradition with them. The past is recreated in the accents of weak nostalgia; the present glorified. The future is promised as no different. All history is, in fact, being gradually revised on the screen until it begins to seem like some glamorous fable. Further, pictures often embody within their very context a kind of visual and illustrative argument that the function of the motion picture is entertainment; thus the reliance which is placed on entertainment within the picture, which is itself an entertainment. Also heroes and heroines are sometimes given new occupations such as social workers; this seems to embody a change in the content of motion pictures. However, it is merely superficial and the heroes and heroines remain as absurd as before.

BUT there is no essential change in the pattern, or in the moral, or in their implications. What characterizes almost all Hollywood pictures is their inner emptiness. This is compensated for by an outer impressiveness. Such impressiveness usually takes the form of a truly grandiose Belasco realism. Nothing is spared to make the setting, the costumes, all of the surface details correct. These efforts help to mask the essential emptiness of the characterizations, and the absurdities and trivialities of the plots. The houses look like houses; the streets look like streets; the people look and talk like people; but they are empty of humanity, credibility, and motivation. Needless to say, the disgraceful censorship

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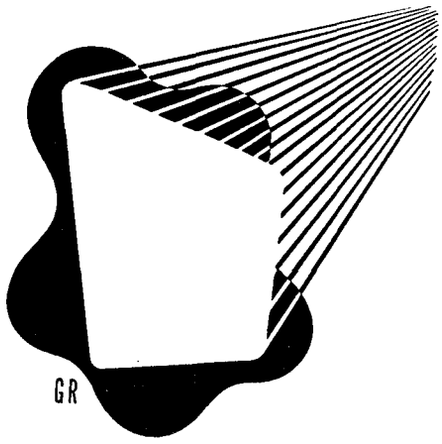
code is an important factor in predetermining the content of these pictures. But the code does not disturb the profits, nor the entertainment value of the films; it merely helps to prevent them from being credible. It isn't too heavy a burden for the industry to bear. In addition to the impressiveness of the settings, there is a use of the camera which at times seems magical. But of what human import is all this skill, all this effort, all this energy in the production of effects, when the story, the representation of life is hollow, stupid, banal, childish? Because a mass of people see these films, they are called democratic. In addition, there is often a formal democratic character embodied in the pictures. Common speech is often introduced; an ambassador acts like a regular guy named Joe; poor working girls are heroines and, now and then, they continue to marry rich men; speeches are introduced propagandistically in which the common man is praised, democracy is cheered for, and the masses are flattered with verbiage. The introduction of such democratic notes is an additional way of masking the real content of the picture; these merely are pressed into the service of glorifying the status quo.

Granted that, now and then, an unusual picture is produced, one different from those which I have characterized. Let us not forget that once we saw a picture called "The Informer.' But does one, or do even ten such films, justify a greater number of their opposites? One might ask a theologian —if a man steals money, and uses some of it to have masses said for the suffering souls in Purgatory, will he thereby redeem his guilt for theft? To argue that because we once in a while get a picture such as "The Informer," Hollywood is, thus, justified, is to argue that you are forgiven for theft because you use some stolen money for the souls in Purgatory. I leave those who argue in this manner to the theologians who can explain what is wrong with their argument. And similarly, the argument that bad pictures are necessary to make money which will permit the use of profits for good pictures is a fallacious one. The reason that this happens, when it does, is because of the social organization of the industry, and I have already indicated what that is.

Hollywood has not created all of this counterfeit culture. It borrowed most of what it has given us from tendencies which antedate its appearance on the cultural scene. In fact, other than in the technical realm, it has invented very little. It has used the powerful inventions of the cinema to repeat most of the cheap stories, the cheap plots, the counterfeits which have long been printed as stories in



commercial magazines. Many of its jokes were even familiar to our fathers, and perhaps our grandparents. Here Hollywood is significant, mainly because it is a clear cut example of the development of commercial culture in the period of finance capital. Due to its size, its wealth, its ability to reach such a mass audience, it has a penetrating influence in the whole field of culture, one which far exceeds that which was exerted in the commercial culture of which it is the heir.

Its penetrating influence has long been observed in the drama and the novel. At present, novels are even sold for pictures before they are written. One can guess what most such books will be like; or if one wishes to know without trusting to a guess, then one can read Louis Bromfield. Another penetrating influence of Hollywood in the novel is the stimulation which it has given to a kind of hard-boiled realism which imitates all of the manners of serious realistic writing, but contains none of the inner meaning, the inner protest against evils, the revelation of social mechanisms and social structures which we perceive in serious realism. This tendency is illustrated by such books as "The Postman Always Rings Twice." The influence of the film industry is to be observed, also, in an incalculable way. For instance, there is the diversion of talent, the fettering of talent, in brief, the retrogression in consciousness about which I have already commented. A large proportion of the literary talent of America is now diverted into Hollywood and radio writing. In many instances, there is a certain inevitability in this. For with the rise of these industries, the situation for writers is such that, on the whole, the book market can support relatively fewer of them. By and large, talent flows towards the highest bidder. A writer represents more than an individual talent; he represents so much social labor which had to be performed in order that he may have developed his talents. This social labor has been expended for the development of literary talents in America. Instead of these talents then returning honest work for this social labor which permitted them to develop, they are used up, burned out in scenario writing. This is a positive social loss. And there can be little doubt of the fact that a correlation exists between the success of this commercial culture, and the loss of esthetic and moral vigor in so much contemporary writing. Such must be a consequence when talent is fettered and sold as a commodity, when audiences are doped, and when tastes are confused, even depraved.

THE culture of a society ought not to be viewed as a mere ornament, a pastime, a form of entertainment. It is the life, the consciousness, the conscience of that society. When it fails to serve as such, then, it moves farther and farther away from the real roots of life. Such is precisely and unmistakably the situation in America where we have this tremendous commercial culture spreading itself like an octopus. And consider how many lives, how much labor power, how much talent, how much of social goods is poured, not only into Hollywood, but into American commercial culture as a whole. The social cost is fabulous. We are familiar with the news telling us of the financial costs of pictures. A million dollars. More than that. And then, we go once again and see what has been produced at such cost. Once again, we see a picture so silly that it insults one's intelligence. Once again, the same old stupid and inept story of boy meets girl, framed, mounted, glorified until it becomes a monumental absurdity. And so inured are most people to this that they do not even see anything wrong in it.

This entire structure can be metaphorically described as a grandiose Luna Park of capitalism. And if the serious artist enters it, he well may quote these words from Dante: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

This is a culture which does not serve men; on the contrary, it makes men its servants. Its highest measure of worth is revealed in little numerals, written in black and red ink on sheets of paper which record profits and losses. Let those who favor this masquerade try to justify it. Far better is it to see it for what it is, and to renounce all of the ideals and aims which it embodies. For the writer to do this places him in that category which one motion picture executive has described as "the irresponsible literati." Correct! Irresponsible to this system; responsible to an ideal of trying to show men what life is like now, of seeking to do what one can in the necessary effort of creating in men that consciousness of their problems, their needs, and their future which will help to create a better society.

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Literature and Science

F. S. C. NORTHROP

THE last quarter of a century is notable for a unique intimacy of literature and science. This manifests itself in two ways: the one, the literary quality and imaginative appeal of the writings of many scientists; the other, the remarkable manner, differing radically from what happened in the nineteenth century, in which recent prose, poetry, and criticism have first absorbed and then been transformed by the new insights of science.

Sir Arthur Eddington's "Stars and Atoms" and "The Nature of the Physical World" are examples of the writings of the scientists. These works are as happy in their frequent literary allusions and in the refinement of their style as they are successful in opening new vistas for the imagination and the intellect, while also confronting us with the scientific and philosophic issues of our time. Sir James Jeans in "The Mysterious Universe" and "Mathematics and Music" similarly combines a lightness of literary touch with a notable capacity to bring science, art, and the meaning of human existence together.

What poet in our time has exhibited the creativity of the human spirit and the unplumbed ranges of the human imagination while at the same time jolting us out of a stultifying spiritual complacency, as has J.B.S. Haldane in "Daedalus" and "Possible Worlds"? In a more sober vein, restricting itself to biology and psychology, but none the less readable and of high literary quality, is Julian Huxley's "Essays of a Biologist." Cruder both in form and content, but equally potent in its popular appeal, is Lancelot Hogben's "Mathematics for the Million." More important and profound is Alfred Whitehead's "Science and the Modern World" with its insight into the romantic movements of the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, wedged as these movements are between the old mechanics of Galileo and Newton and the new philosophy of contemporary science.

In a quite different vein, but none the less important is Bertrand Russell's "Mysticism and Logic" with its "Free Man's Worship." This is fine writing. It also strikes an unequivocal contemporary note—one which is to re-echo again and again through the pages of I. A. Richards's "Principles of Literary Criticism" and "Science and Poetry." Then, in a somewhat similar iconoclastic, yet more positive mood, with a freshness and incisiveness of style which has caused one observant reader to remark that our biologists write better English than our professors of literature, there is Hans Zinsser's "Rats, Lice and History" and "As I Remember Him." In a comparable manner the scientific Lynd's "Middletown" has pushed the literary Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" into the background. It would seem almost that if today one wants what literature has always given previous generations—namely, a living rather than a studied prose and the poetry of a quickened imagination, a freed mind, and a sensitive spirit which has not confused honest feeling with shallow sentiment pursued at the expense of knowledge and thought—then it is to our scientists rather than to our humanists that we must turn.

BUT this is only part of the story. During this period in which the scientists have been taking on more and more of the traditional functions of the man of letters, the poets, novelists, and critics have been absorbing and, as a consequence, have been transformed by the suggestions of a new science. This science has given us not merely a more imaginatively open universe into which to breath, but also a more emotional and released man to do the breathing. Poems, novels, and criticism could hardly be insensitive to such a change. The result is a contemporary poetry deviating in form and content from that of previous centuries and a new criticism equally different from its predecessors—as different in fact as James Joyce and T. S. Eliot are from Shelley and Browning and as I. A. Richards and John Dewey are from Ruskin and Matthew Arnold.

The effect is sufficiently arresting and significant to warrant a more detailed designation of its cause. Contrast usually heightens vision. Hence, we shall understand the twentieth century the better if we set it against the background of the nineteenth. It will be well also to note the source of the more open universe first and come to our concept of the more emotional and contemporary man afterwards.

Two factors have contributed to the placing of man in a universe more congenial to the expression of his moral and esthetic nature. In passing from the nineteenth into the twentieth century, mathematical physics replaced biology as the science of predominant importance. Nothing has happened in zoölogy or botany in our time to compare in significance with the discoveries of Planck and Einstein in mathematical physics. This is as true for the popular as it is for the scientific mind, as the news value of Einstein's name and the sales of the books of Eddington, Jeans, Whitehead, and Lancelot Hogben clearly demonstrate. This change was significant not merely for what it said but for the human faculties which it called upon for the saying of it. The more open world in which we now live is the product of the one as well as the other.

F. S. C. Northrop: "The new science and the new literature of our time both stand, and both need each other."

What science said is personified in the replacement of Newton, LaPlace, and Darwin with Einstein, Planck, and especially Heisenberg, with the latter's *principle of indeterminacy*. Pauli's *exclusion principle* is also equally important but touches novel scientific and philosophical issues which are too far-reaching to be considered here. These new names signify that the old rigid cast iron universe in which man seemed to be nothing but a mere cog in a vast cosmical machine has evaporated. The field of space-time, the cosmical constants, and the organic recognition upon the part of one electron of the presence of others even in the organization of the atom represent something quite refreshing. No longer is nature to be conceived as a mere collision of individualistic *laissez faire* atoms, nor man merely as a collocation of such atoms, struggling for existence. In this new physical universe of Planck,

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Einstein, Heisenberg, and Pauli even Darwin begins to take on a new aspect.

Let no one suppose that this is significant merely for science and natural philosophy. It now enables us to see the literature of the nineteenth century in a new light, as literally an escape literature. It enables us also to see why this had to be its character.

Darwin's man in Newton's universe was not a creature who could function as a free moral agent or as one who could regard the intuitions of the artist as anything more than mere phantasms. Thus the nineteenth century's Keats, Shelley, and Rossetti had no alternative but to run away from their own universe and their own home to Greece and medieval Rome and Spain, and Byron and Carlyle alike, after the manner of Kant in modern moral philosophy, who gave rise to the romanticism which was their inspiration, had no choice but to indulge in their own artificially exuberant romanticism. Poets and critics alike sought a "sweetness and light" not their own, thereby providing an escape literature because their own universe did not permit them to have literature at all.

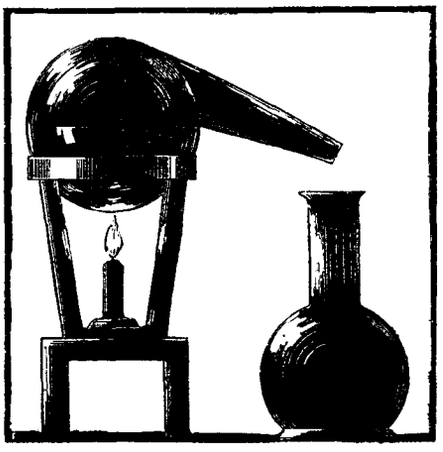
Nevertheless, notwithstanding the undeniable magic of its verse, the more exuberant and exaggerated in its preciousness because of the very desperation which called it forth, this literature did not satisfy. Even pure humanists, such as F. L. Lucas in "The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal," found it wanting. Also the so-called "idealism" and "moral freedom" which were behind its romanticism turned out in the hands of the politically romantic Germans who created it, because of its very release from the sobering effect of scientific knowledge, to be not a goodness which was too good to be true, but a set of practical demands which were too arbitrary to be tolerated. Similarly, the classicism in its return to the beauty, however sublime, which was Greece and Rome became so much not one's own that there was little of one's self left for the appreciation of it. Consequently, when following the first war of this century, mathematical physics gave the modern man a universe of his own, which, if not yet fully reconciled with moral and esthetic values, at least gave promise of becoming so, the poets, novelists, and critics were quick to move in and inhabit it.

But the faculties of the human mind necessary for the understanding of this new universe of the scientists were as significant as its objective character. Even the most superficial acquaintance was sufficient to indicate that it cannot be known merely by looking at it. Nor can it be grasped even by the intuitive images of the poet's imagination. For not only the neat physical model of the physics of the nineteenth century, but even any image whatever which even the most fanciful poet's imagination might devise, is incapable of representing it. Only the quite different purely formal imagination of the mathematician can lay hold of it. Thus it is, that in our time the realm and the limitless ranges of the human imagination, necessary even for an adequate and experimentally verified science of the actual, have been discovered to be in a new place—a place moreover at which the poet, providing he follows the mathematical physicist, can hint vaguely and metaphorically but into which literally he cannot enter.

This is the real reason why the prose of our scientists has replaced the verse of our poets in stimulating and extending the human imagination. The cause is not that the scientists have been active and the poets imaginatively indolent. It is, instead, that the richest sphere of the imagination is one that can be entered only by the formal imagination of the mathematician, not by the concrete, intuitive imagination of the poet.

But science has altered man's conception of himself as well as his conception of his universe and the faculties necessary to comprehend it. Put more concretely, Darwin has been supplemented with Freud.

It was Freud who replaced Locke's essentially blank, esthetically and emotionally empty, puritanical Protestant soul, and Hume's notion of the self as a mere association of vivid and faint sense data, and Darwin's merely biological behavioristic man, with an emotional human being, of whom, like the soul of the Spaniard as defined by Salvador de Madariaga, passion is the essence. This is the kind of scientifically conceived person with whom the arts, and their emotional and vivid esthetic materials, can function. With such a science of man it is not necessary for poets, novelists, dramatists, and critics to run off to Greece and Rome, or to indulge in an intoxicated romanticism, in order to find something esthetic to say. Within such a contemporary intellectual climate Eugene O'Neill's dramas, James Joyce's "Ulysses," Aldous Huxley's "Point Counter Point," I. A. Richards's "Principles of Literary Criticism," Ernest Hemingway's "Death in the Afternoon," and the poetry of T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Conrad Aiken, W. H. Auden, E. E. Cummings, Stephen Spender, Marianne Moore, Gertrude Stein, and countless others can be born.



THIS literature shows that the science of our century has given the arts a richer subject matter and a wider domain than they previously enjoyed, even though this domain does not extend as far in its imaginative range as that of the mathematical physicists. For as Edwin Muir has written of James Joyce, "he has revealed the swarming world of sub-conscious and half-conscious thoughts which constitute three-fourths of our life, and he has shown that it has a magical and excessive beauty." Similarly in the "hierarchy of interests" of the new psychology and the resolution or easing of its conflicts by emotive rather than merely cognitive means, I. A. Richards in "Science and Poetry" finds a new future for poetry, as John Dewey in "Human Nature and Conduct" and Charles Stevenson in his forthcoming "Ethics and Language," find a new and added meaning and technique for the good life. Thus, although the science of the twentieth century, by the imaginative appeal of its mathematical physics, has shifted from literature to science the function of providing the most extensive stimulus to the human imagination, this science in its psychology of the emotions and the subconscious has amply repaid literature and the arts for this loss by providing them with richer materials, a wider domain, and more novel functions than they possessed previously.

It might seem that this is the end of the story. Literature and science having again joined in holy wedlock, one might suppose, after the manner of the ending of the American movie, that they live together happily ever afterward.

Unfortunately, the participants themselves prevent so facile a conclusion. Aldous Huxley started, to be sure, with the Freudian biological man of "Point Counter Point" but he has not ended there. This "Brave New World" gave birth as its author con-

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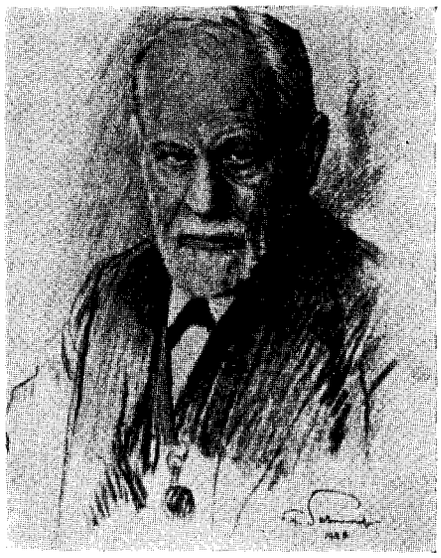
tinued to live with it to the thoroughly disillusioned "hero" of "Eyeless in Gaza." T. S. Eliot wrote "The Waste-land" but he has since written "The Idea of a Christian Society" and even I. A. Richards has departed from the psychological irrationalism of Freud and the excessively positivistic and mechanical theory of meaning of Ogden and Richards's "The Meaning of Meaning" at least sufficiently to admit in his Bergen Lecture at Yale University that even literary criticism must have a metaphysics. Clearly, all is not well in the new utopia.

WHERE does the plot take one from here? Neither the contemporary literature nor its critics provide an answer. T. S. Eliot and Aldous Huxley suggest that we return to the old faith—not that of the nineteenth or even the eighteenth century, to be sure, since this is too recently known to permit its fatal weaknesses to be forgotten, but that of the fourteenth century and the Middle Ages. But surely this will not do. The new literature and the new criticism is not nothing even though its most devout adherents have discovered that it is not everything. Because a modern science and philosophy as conceived by literary men has revealed its very disillusioning shortcomings, is no reason for supposing that a medieval science and philosophy which, as the doubting Descartes can testify, exhibited equally disillusioning and fatal inadequacies in the sixteenth century, will be any the less untrustworthy.

But a more important consideration remains. There is more to contemporary science, even its psychology and biology, than Freud's psychoanalysis and I. A. Richards's excessively positivistic and mechanical initial theory of meaning. To this fact the writings of the scientists considered earlier in this essay clearly testify. Also the contemporary sciences of psychology and psychiatry have found the Freudian theory to be as misleading at many times in its diagnostic and therapeutic predictions as it has been at other times suggestive and illuminating. This has caused contemporary psychologists to attempt to put the Freudian theory on a less verbal and metaphorical and more controlled scientific basis. To this end they have asked themselves how factors like "unconscious drives" can be verified. This question has guided them to the method of mathematical physics, which, as we have noted, also deals with unobserved events and processes. But to understand this method of exact science is to become aware of the limitation of the Freudian irrationalism as the sole measure of scientific procedure in psychology and to become equally aware of the limitation of I. A. Richards's original theory of meaning. Thus it may not be contemporary science which has failed our contemporary humanists but their excessively psychological and uncritically Freudian conception of what this science means.

—From the caricature by E. Coia
Aldous Huxley

Under these circumstances, those like Alfred Whitehead who approach their theory of symbolism from the standpoint of the mathematical rather than merely the psychological science of our time are likely to be better guides. Also an analysis of the method of mathematical physics may be expected to provide a more embracing and sound basis for literary criticism than a further pursuit of the method of psychoanalysis. To be sure, the method of mathematical physics seems utterly foreign to literature and esthetics when it is examined initially and superficially. Nevertheless, it contains within itself the formal imaginatively known factor in the nature of things which only mathematics can literally designate. And, let it be remembered, this is the factor which has inspired the distinctly literary and imaginative quality of the writings of our contemporary scientists. The method of mathematical physics also contains within itself the immediately apprehended factor in the nature of things laden with its emotional esthetic content, with which art is concerned, and which our contemporary literature has so greatly extended, at the suggestion of Freud, to include "the sub-conscious and the half-conscious." What the astro-physicist sees when he looks at the sky is not the internal constitution of the sun but the color and the form of the sunset in all its beauty. The inner molecular organization of this star is an inference from the esthetically immediate materials—an inference which only the formal mathematical imagination, not the esthetic intuition can fully grasp. Moreover, did the method of mathematical physics not contain within itself the emotionally laden, esthetically immediate materials, this method would be totally unable to verify its mathematical and imaginative theory of the chemical make-up of the sun.



Sigmund Freud

Similarly, the psychologist is finding, as he gains an accurate understanding of his method, that what we immediately apprehend in man is the emotional, esthetically vivid factor in human nature with which the novelist, and especially the contemporary literature, is most expert, and that the behaving Darwinian man with a cortex and nervous system responding to a stimulus from his environment, and the confused, Freudian man, with his unconscious and hence unseen conflicts and drives, are imaginatively and theoretically known factors in human nature which only the method of hypothesis of mathematical physics, checked by meticulously controlled experiment against the immediately-apprehended more esthetic data, can adequately handle.

IT appears, therefore, notwithstanding the recent temporary disillusionment and suggested estrangement, that the new science and the new literature of our time both stand, and both need each other. Each contributes something unique in the nature of things and at the heart of human nature. In fact, man and nature alike are each constituted of the theoretically known component which only the formal imagination of the mathematical scientist can designate and the esthetically immediate component which only the concrete intuition of the artist can adequately convey.

Consequently, the division of labor

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between science and literature is not that the former is purely scientific and the latter, purely literary. The literary and imaginative quality of the writings of the scientists, and the natural history, empirical scientific content of the psychological works of the contemporary poets, novelists, and critics, give the lie to any such thesis. Instead, both science and literature are each both scientific and literary in different ways. Contemporary science is more poetic than poetry with respect to its capacity to raise the human spirit to the envisagement of new possibilities and to extend the reaches of the human imagination. Contemporary poetry is more scientific than science in its power to convey both nature and man as pure fact in all their realistic esthetic immediacy apart from mathematical and imaginatively designated theory. But contemporary science is more scientific than poetry with respect to the capacity to understand and control the data which the poet experiences, and similarly contemporary poetry is more poetic than even the most imaginative mathematical physics in its capacity to make us feel and enjoy what the scientist understands and manipulates.

But before a poet can make us feel and enjoy the world and man which the scientist's verified imaginative theory reveals to us, this poet must understand the theory. Such an art for our time does not exist, although one of our talented younger contemporary poets, Muriel Rukeyser, in the biography "Willard Gibbs," has recognized the need for the meeting of the artist and the mathematical physicist which is a prerequisite for its existence. The creation of such an art is one of the major tasks of the literature of tomorrow. Its second opportunity is to be found in exhibiting the immediately apprehended factor in nature and man in all its esthetical immediacy and purity, apart from any theory either contemporary or traditional.

Until both of these forms of art are pursued independently, and then combined harmoniously, our knowledge and our feelings will be at odds with each other and there will be no genuine peace in either our culture or our souls. It appears that the happiness of man and the possibility of a more enlightened and humane society are intimately connected with the capacity of science and literature to maintain their individual integrity while also supplementing and sustaining each other.

No Deadline
On WAR BONDS

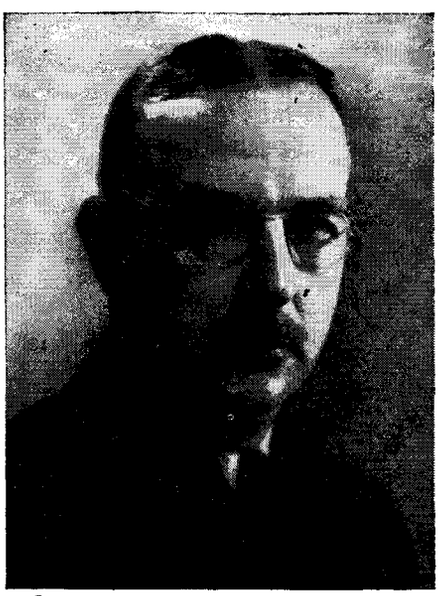
Twenty Years of the American Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

IN 1924, the year that *The Saturday Review* was founded, I attended my first play as reviewer for *The Nation*. By a stroke of rare good luck that first play was "What Price Glory?," the robustious melodrama (and something more) which convinced a good many people that the American drama had at last come of age.

It was not, to be sure, the first native play to challenge the long accepted dictum which had been finally formulated by Eugene Walter in the words: "Playwriting is essentially a trade." Nearly a decade before, I had witnessed on Third Avenue the early defiances thrown in the face of the "commercial" theater by the Washington Square Players, and, only a little over a year after that, the similar protests formulated at the Provincetown Playhouse in MacDougal Street. Indeed, the tiny stage of the latter had already exhibited several of O'Neill's early plays including "The Emperor Jones" (1920), and his "Beyond The Horizon" and "Anna Christie" had been produced "up town."

Yet there are several reasons why the date of "What Price Glory?" was really a memorable one, nevertheless. O'Neill was at that time still primarily a "little theatre" man. The Provincetown group was still limited to an audience of not more than two hundred and ninety-nine, and the Washington Square Players (by now calling themselves the Theatre Guild) had just discovered a few months previously their first important native playwright by producing Elmer Rice's "The Adding Machine." "What Price Glory?," on the other hand, defied the conventions of Broadway on Broadway itself and demonstrated once and for all that the "new drama" had an audience of imposing proportions in the commercial theatre. Moreover, it was soon so far from being an isolated instance that within two or three years a whole school of playwrights was producing works on a level of seriousness which would have been unthinkable on Broadway only a decade before. Sidney Howard's first important piece, "They Knew What They Wanted," came only a few weeks after "What Price Glory?;" George Kelly's "The Show-off" during the same year; and John Howard Lawson's "Processional" during the same season. Never before had so much radically new talent been popping up here and there in the American theatre. Such a beginning seemed to hold out the possibility that a real golden age of the drama was not far away.



Joseph Wood Krutch: "The playwrights of the twenties thought they knew where they were going."

Of the men just mentioned, Howard is untimely dead; Kelly and Lawson no longer writing for the stage. Howard and Kelly each wrote a number of plays as good as (though hardly markedly better than) the first which brought them fame. Much the same may be said of the still active Rice and of S. N. Behrman, whose first independent play, "The Second Man," was not produced until 1927 but who must be thought of as the last to join this early group. Perhaps, indeed, only O'Neill has really achieved work as fine as it once seemed not unreasonable to hope for from many, and there are few indeed who would maintain that, despite a certain number of good plays, the Broadway of the last few years has suggested the imminence of great things about to come. Our little renaissance ceased to be a renaissance about 1929, and nothing capable of inspiring similar hopes has since developed.

Never, on the other hand, has the American theatre lapsed into the state from which it had rarely emerged even to the extent of an isolated play, until just after the First World War. Hence,

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Eugene O'Neill

whatever the playwrights of the twenties may have failed to accomplish, they did establish the expectation that the dramatist would operate upon a level of seriousness comparable to that of current writing in other forms. Before them, we can hardly be said to have had a dramatic literature. Few indeed of our playwrights could be read—as anyone may prove to himself by attempting to read the published plays available. Since the mid-twenties we have had such a literature—to the same extent at least that we have one in the form of biography or fiction. Whatever its absolute value may be, it is at least not unworthy of comparison with contemporary literature as a whole.

Now 1929, which marks the end of the first phase of the American drama, is fifteen years ago. As a teacher of college students I have occasion to realize, more often than most people no older than I, just how long ago that can seem to those now reaching their maturity, and to how great an extent the twenties constitute for them a remote historical epoch, which needs explaining only somewhat less than the Age of Elizabeth or the Age of Anne. Perhaps, therefore, those who were readers of *The Saturday Review* even in those days will forgive me if I explain for the benefit of their juniors certain things about the twenties which alone make it possible to understand either its plays or the reasons why the history of the new drama is not continuous from the beginning to the present day.

IF these juniors are historically-minded enough to think at all about the years when certain still active dramatists produced their first works, they think of them as constituting the age of F. Scott Fitzgerald and of bathtub gin. Moreover, they are reluctant to believe that those of us who were young then—even some who did on occasion read Fitzgerald and did on occasion drink bathtub gin—were at the same time very serious about certain things, rather different from those which serious young people are serious about today. The problems which we pondered had, for the most part, nothing to do with elementary security either physical or economic, and it is (as I have discovered while trying to explain these problems for the benefit of students) sometimes difficult for those who, as adults, have known only the post-1929 world to realize that problems which are neither military nor economic can be problems at all. If, I am asked, you feared no foreign enemy, and if the normal expectation of the young adult was that he would find a place ready to receive him in the trade or profession of his choice, then what on earth *did* you worry about and with what problems could a serious literature deal?

No doubt our fundamental self-confidence was hardly compatible

Elmer Rice

with our disillusion over the results of the great war from which we had recently emerged. No doubt it was hardly more compatible with the contempt of the sophisticates for the exuberant materialistic optimism of those who were proclaiming the New Age, in which everybody was going to get richer and richer without limit or even without pause. But the famous disillusion of the twenties was only skin deep. However little justified our confidence may have been, it existed, and the result was not, as serious people today tend to think inevitable, that we were concerned with nothing except vulgar trifles. To be relieved of the necessity of occupying one's self with "world affairs" or "economic problems" is not necessarily to devote one's self to trivialities. It may be to begin to explore the eternal, inevitable problems of the human soul; to concern one's self with the good life as opposed to those of the tolerable life; to ask, not how men may be freed from fear and want, but how and to what ends should free men live. Today such questions are postponed for the obvious reason that the very existence of free men in the future is doubtful. But if that existence is ever secured, the problems must be taken up again if security is to mean more than gross materiality.

The early offerings of the Washington Square Players were almost completely non-political. So, too, were those of the Provincetown group, despite the fact that various of its members were later to be prominent in radical political movements. Today the first question which is asked of any coterie is a question concerning its political direction, and nothing can better illustrate how different was the situation a quarter of a century ago than the fact that John Reed and Edna St. Vincent Millay both contributed plays to the Provincetown. Criticism of society then meant primarily a criticism of morals, and manners, and tastes, not a criticism of political or economic institutions. If American life was denounced, as it often was, it was denounced as crass, puritanical, unsophisticated, and non-intellectual—not as capitalistic or fascist; and it is startling to be reminded that, from the standpoint of the intellectual, at least, the great scandal of 1924 was the Scopes trial at Dayton, Tennessee. The question whether or not the theory of evolution should be taught in a remote country village hardly seems a very important one today, but a society which could really afford to take it seriously would be a far more desirable society than one which, like ours, cannot.

By 1925 the Communist Party was, of course, beginning to be heard of, but even to most of its members revolution probably seemed pretty re-

(*Please turn to page* 40)

—*Vandamm Studio*

Sidney Howard

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Life on Broadway as It Began

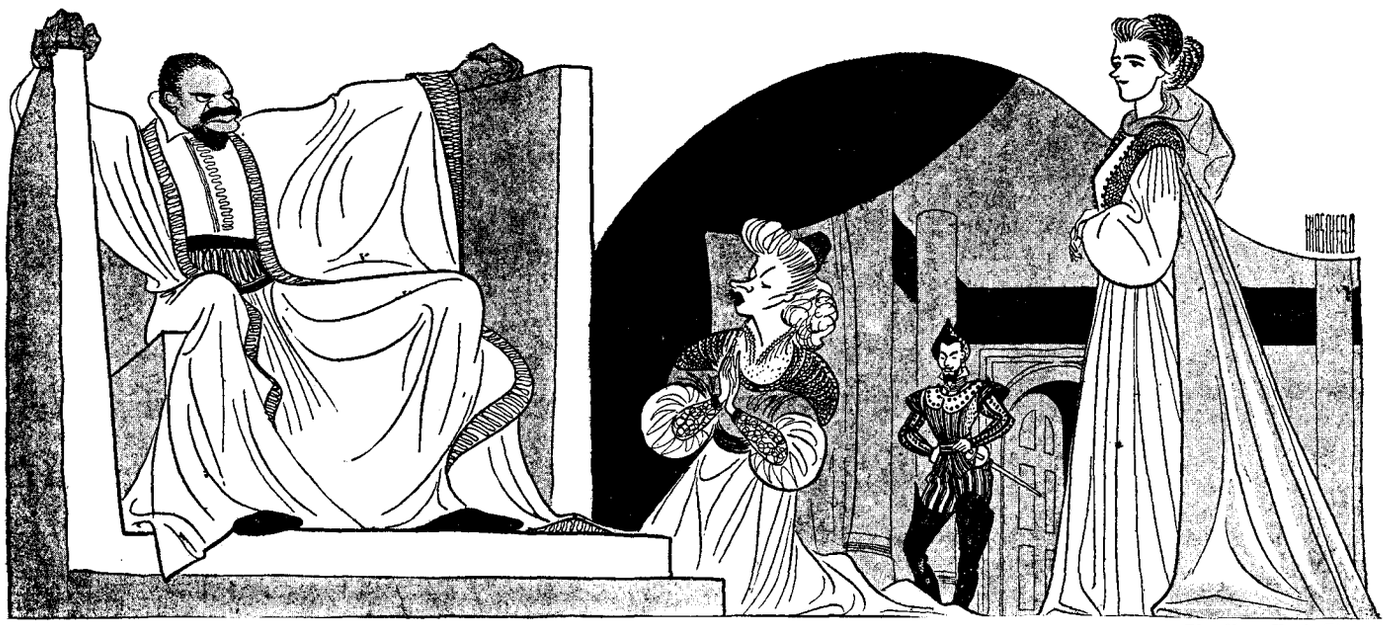
ALBERT HIRSCHFELD'S name has never been up in lights over a theatre marquee but this has not kept it from becoming one of the best known in the world of the stage. His high vertical signature so familiar to metropolitan newspaper readers has adorned caricatures of plays and stage folk for about two decades now, and it would be hard to think of a smash hit or prominent player which has not come in for treatment by his revealing pen. On this page are reproduced, in connection with the accompanying article by Mr. Krutch, drawings Mr. Hirschfeld considers among his best.

How Mr. Hirschfeld became connected with the theatre is a story that seems worth recalling. First a sculptor, he attended the National Academy of Art, the Art Students' League, the County Council in London, and Julienne's in Paris. In 1922, he went to a show of Sascha Guitry's in this country and afterward drew a caricature of him. Three years later while working in New York, he received a telegram from *The New York Times* to do a large drawing of Bill Robinson. The wire was signed Zollatell, and Hirschfeld thought a friend of his was playing a trick. He phoned *The Times* but was told Mr. Zollatell was not in. So he went ahead with the drawing and presented it to *The Times* in person. Mr. Zollatell again was not in but the caricature was accepted and for three years Mr. Hirschfeld continued to draw for a man he had never met. They were finally introduced by a mutual friend at a party.

Mr. Hirschfeld has had one-man exhibitions. He also is the author of "Manhattan Oases" and "Harlem."

—*New York Herald Tribune*

1935 **Clifford Odets, upper left, author of "Waiting for Lefty," in which he appeared himself, with Elia Kazan, Ruth Nelson, Lewis Leverett, and Alexander Kirkland, troupers in the Group Theatre's two plays of protest, the other being "Till the Day I Die."**



—*The New York Times*

1942 **Paul Robeson sketched in the role of Othello before the play came to Broadway. Also shown above are Uta Hagen, José Ferrer, and Margaret Webster.**

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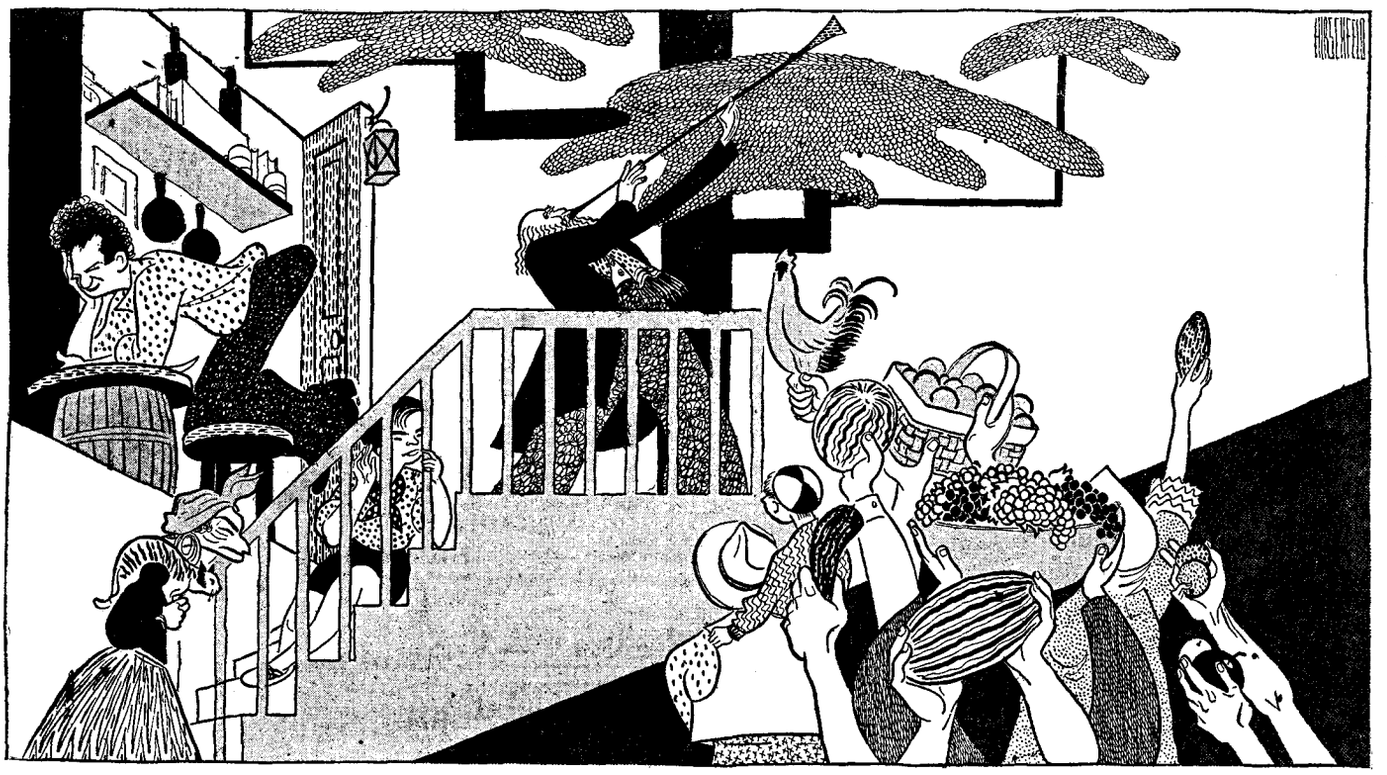
at Eight-Forty Over the Last Twenty Years



—*The New York Times*

1939 **Here we have a cross-section of the William Saroyan fantasy, "My Heart's in the Highlands," the folks being Philip Loeb, Hester Sondergaard, Sidney Lumet, Art Smith, and townspeople.**

—*New York Herald Tribune*

1940 **On the stage are Ivan Simpson, Amanda Randolph, Ruth Matteson, Elliott Nugent, who was Thurber's partner in authorship; Leon Ames and Matt Briggs. The melancholy spectators are Co-author James Thurber and Producer Herman Shumlin, who were sketched here at a tryout of the comedy, "The Male Animal."**

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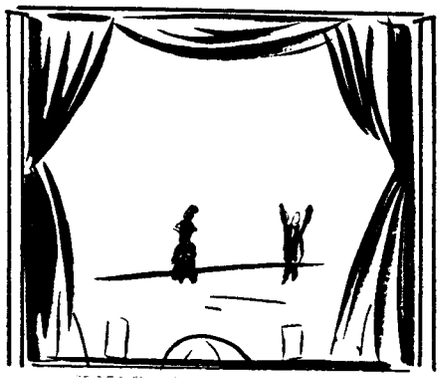
(*Continued from page* 37)

mote, and the plays which began to be produced at the little Playwrights' Theatre on Fifty-third Street were often extravagant rather than grim. Outside the definite communist group, political radicalism had little tendency to crystalize into doctrine. Even plays like Rice's "The Adding Machine" or O'Neill's "The Hairy Ape" are somewhat baffled considerations of the spiritual poverty of the underprivileged rather than revolutionary protests, and the change in point of view did not come until the crash of 1929 introduced the grim epoch of which these war years are a continuous part. Most of the established playwrights, with the exception of O'Neill, reacted to the shock by attempting a reorientation plainly evident in their plays. Thus Elmer Rice, who had just before written, in "Street Scene," a completely non-political though completely sympathetic tragedy-melodrama about life in the slums, came out with a series of propagandistic plays; John Howard Lawson, who had celebrated America's exuberant health in "Processional," turned to a Marxian denunciation of American decadence in "Gentlewoman" and other didactic dramas; Sidney Howard, who had produced a whole series of studies in manners and morals, wrote "The Ghost of Yankee Doodle," and even S. N. Behrman felt increasingly the need to justify his existence by permitting graver and graver questions to be asked in the drawing rooms which his characters inhabit. Inevitably any new insurgent group was a political group and the Theatre Union, definitely committed to the propaganda play, was (or at least tried to be) for the new age what the Washington Square and the Provincetown Players had been for the old.

IT would probably be pretty generally agreed that the work done by the established group under the new dispensation was less successful than that which it had done in the twenties. Of the newly emerging playwrights, on the other hand, much was promised and, for a time, the theatrical seemed all but dominated by the Theatre Union, by the somewhat less exclusively political but still definitely leftish Group Theatre, and, finally, by the various units of the Federal Theatre, which sponsored the technique of the Living Newspaper as the one which permitted the directest treatment of social problems in theatrical form. But none of these three institutions survives, none had a history comparable to that of the Provincetown or Washington Square Players; and of the new playwrights, who arose to supply them with plays, only Clifford Odets has been recently



active. As a matter of fact, the political theatre as a self-conscious institution collapsed completely after a very brief existence. If, on the one hand, the nascent humanistic drama which began to flourish just after the First World War had withered in the chill breezes of the depression, the "revolutionary" drama which sprang up determined to take its place failed, on the other hand, to exhibit the persistent vitality which was confidently predicted for it.

During the last three years Broadway has provided at least as many interesting theatrical productions as a war time can reasonably be expected to produce. "What Price Glory?" did not appear until six years after the First World War had ended, and "Journey's End," its English counterpart, not until even later. Actually, the theatre has at the present moment far more to offer than it had in 1917 or '18 because the elevation of its general level, which took place during the twenties, has, to a considerable extent, been maintained even though individual playwrights of arresting originality have not continued to appear as frequently as they once did. But there is no observable movement in any definite direction comparable even to that movement toward "social significance," which dominated the early thirties. Eclecticism is the rule. Few would care to say (as many were once eager to proclaim) that they now know where the American drama is going or, indeed, whether or not it is going anywhere. Most plays are far more sophisticated and far more mature in their conception and writing than most plays were during the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, but there is no evidence that any strong or novel creative impulse is struggling to achieve expression.

It is, of course, still an open question whether or not it is worth while to attempt to account for such a state of affairs or its opposite. The theory that the winds of talent blow as they list is hard to disprove, and though an explanation of what did happen may usually be found, it is always *de post facto* and, until the analysts of social forces or trends can predict the future as confidently as they can account for the past, the value of their theories is dubious. But it may at least be persuasively maintained that the upheavals produced in the American consciousness by the events which began in 1929 and which include the present war have effectively prevented that clear formulation in a dramatist's mind of his aims, convictions, and intentions, which is necessary not only for great work but for any work exhibiting confident force. Whatever the future may think of the ultimate worth of the particular brand of libertarian humanism which the twenties attempted to promulgate in the theatre as well as through other media, at least it was something in the importance of which a whole generation sincerely believed and something of which it found the artistic expression interesting. No doubt the Marxian dramatists of the twenties believed quite as sincerely in the importance of their faith but, possibly because to them artistic expression was at most only a means and never one of the ends in itself, they never found a dramatic form capable of seeming interesting for long, and the revolutionary theatre died of the boredom which it generated. Of its playwrights, Clifford Odets alone succeeded in seeming genuinely interesting rather than merely "important," and hence he alone among the "Marxian dramatists" has taken his place in the list of twentieth century American playwrights, who seem likely to be remembered even in histories of our drama. Mr. Saroyan,

Love in a Time of War

By Alfred Kreymborg

BENEFICENT the trees that speak no word
But stand in earth and endure its casualties,
Or weigh two birds on a branch like any other
Bird and sweetheart nakedly at ease;
Or shade two human birds who ecstacies
Pull at the flesh again like Adam and Eve,
And moving breath to breath in their pure faith
Have neither sound nor seed but love, one love
Blooming above our time and aftermath.

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SOME OF THE 5,000,000 WHO SAW THE "AQUACADE" AT THE WORLDS FAIR—
"TOBACCO ROAD" PASSED ABIE'S IRISH ROSE RECORD OF 2527 PERFORMANCES — THE SWING AND HOT MIKADOS RAN SIMULTANEOUSLY
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 1939'S OUTSTANDING PLAYWRIGHT
ACT OF CONGRESS
$10000000 BOX-OFFICE RECEIPTS
PULITZER PRIZE
ABE LINCOLN IN ILLINOIS
REVOLT! CHILDREN REVOLT!
GARBO LAUGHED
DEATH OF THE FEDERAL THEATRE —
THE CRITICS CIRCLE MADE UP ITS MIND TO GIVE NO AWARD THIS YEAR —
SOPHIE TUCKER BECAME A LABOR LEADER

—The New York Times

Here Mr. Hirschfeld points out some of the things that happened in and about the threatre and along Broadway during 1939.

the other interesting new talent, represents a reaction against a reaction.

IT is hardly to be expected that the drama will discover any enduring new direction as long as the war is actually in progress. During that time all human activities are abnormal; no one considers his aims or even his habits as following a pattern intended to be permanent; everything is assumed to be only pro tem. Inevitably we live from day to day, inevitably put off fundamental decisions until it shall become possible to see a little further ahead than any man can see now. Audiences are not likely to ask, nor playwrights likely to be in a position to supply, more than responses to the need of the moment—war plays (either earnest or merely patriotically stimulating) on the one hand, diversions on the other. And this is perhaps as good a place as any to note that to accept as inevitable a distinction between the entertaining and the significant is fatal to any art, since the best art is always both at once, neither the one *or* the other nor even the one *and* the other.

Unfortunately, moreover, it hardly seems likely that even a very satisfactory termination of the war plus even a moderately satisfactory approach to the solution of post-war problems will immediately reëstablish either material or spiritual stability. After all, the war did not burst upon a world in which men were very sure of either themselves or their intentions; upon a world which knew where it was going even before the shattering blow of a world conflict fell upon it. And as has previously been suggested, its sense of insecurity had been reflected in the pre-war theatre to such an extent that lack of direction was almost as evident in 1938 as it was in 1943. The playwrights of the twenties did think (however mistakenly) that they knew where they were going—namely, toward what I have called a libertarian humanism—and they did assume not only that it was worthwhile to go in that direction but that they were the inheritors of a world order stable enough to make possible for an indefinite time the evolutionary achievement of that libertarian humanism. Similarly the Marxian playwrights of the early thirties had an at least equally ardent faith in the limitless future of a different sort, of evolution along Marxian lines even though they never won to it any public as large as has been won by the libertarian humanists. But by 1936 or 1937 the Marxian drama had lost its impetus. There were a certain number of leftist plays being produced, a certain number of plays more or less in the manner of the twenties, and a certain number of comedies and farces written with considerable skill and considerable sophistication. But there was no school of playwrights recognizedly dominant, no theatrical "movement" under way. What the theatre was providing just before the war was not so very different from what it has been providing since, and the reason is that men had already begun to live lives dominated by the sense that everything is pro tem; that we must wait and see what happens next before we can come to any fundamental decisions, much less make any permanent plans. And it is hardly to be expected that the signing of a peace will immediately reëstablish a material or spiritual life as orderly as that which existed before the war—much less settle immediately the problems which were already almost paralyzingly acute by the mid-thirties.

One who has during twenty years spent a considerable portion of his time and energy going to the theatre, thinking about the theatre, and writing about the theatre may nevertheless offer himself one small congratulation. Since the second half of the eighteenth century, when professional drama critics first invented their trade, there has not been anywhere more than one other twenty-year period during which the current drama was as significant a part of current literature, or when it was as much worth writing about. If that, in view of what has been said, seems no very tremendous thing to claim, at least the drama critic can console himself with the thought that, the world having come to the state to which it has now come, many another man has devoted himself to enterprises which can hardly claim to have achieved even that modest success.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 540)

LAURENCE BINYON:
LITTLE HANDS

O fingers small of shell-tipped rose,
How should you know you hold so much?
Two full hearts beating you enclose,
Hopes, fears, prayers, longing, joys, and woes . . . . . .
. . . . . O little hands!
More, more than wisdom understands
And love, love only knows.

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SRL's First Editorial

The following editorial, from the August 2, 1924 issue of The Saturday Review of Literature, *was titled "Timely and Timeless, by the Editor."*

A LITERARY review without a program is like modern man without his clothes—healthy, agile, functioning in all his senses, but regarded as less than respectable, even by his friends. Yet what is a program but a reflection of temperament! A sanguine, full-blooded man thinks well of his universe, a melancholy man thinks ill of his, and each makes his program. There is more honest philosophizing in many a casual newspaper column, or blunt plain man's opinion than in elaborate sets of principles chosen to fit a prevailing mood.

We cannot escape from our moods but we need not capitalize them for the supposed benefit of bored contemporaries. *The Saturday Review* is to have a guiding purpose that must be drawn not from the temperament of the editorial staff but from things as they are in literature.

* * *

To my thinking, one of the most deceptive statements ever uttered is that life is more interesting than literature. Life is only rarely and by moments more interesting than literature; then, I grant, it is engrossing beyond all imagined experience. Vigorous writing is just an attempt to recapture the flavor and pulsation of such moments. But hour-by-hour living is dull beside good books, badly composed, badly selected, unrevealing. It is a fair question whether the shop girl going to work in the morning does not get more sensations of actual life from the book she is reading than through all the rest of her usual day. Men and women who do not find good books interesting are either too dull or too vivid. Either their imaginations cannot be kindled or their real life is too intense to permit them even for a moment to step out of it.

That is why literature is one of the greatest subjects, and, like all great subjects, to be taken with both good humor and utmost seriousness, to be loved and made fun of, to be pondered and fought for—

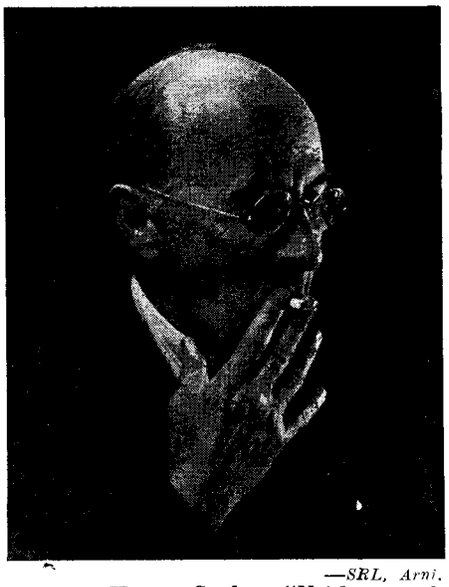
> How charming is divine Philosophy!
> Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose.

The modern fashion, however, does not regard literature—or at least contemporary literature as a harsh and crabbed female, but rather as a much advertised show girl, bought and paid for, and to be written about at so much a word. A great topic cannot be so approached. In the hearts of those who assess good writing as if it were pig iron or ladies' hose, good humor and sympathy are dead as soon as born. No affectation of wit or enthusiasm can take their place.

A critic of literature must be aware of his good fortune and unblushingly embrace his subject, leaving reticence and prejudice behind. The half-hearted intellectual afraid of his enthusiasm is as much of a charge upon criticism as the entranced sentimentalist. One suffers from too little love to give and the other from too little sense in loving.

But in pursuing literature, a literary review (which is a kind of literary personality with motives and character) must have two purposes, especially in America. There are two functions of literature that, so far as I am aware, have not been clearly distinguished in their modern aspect, although the general difference has been the cause of many a lively row. Literature can be timeless and literature can be timely.

There is a saving quality in the great authors which in every age had been a solace for the fine spirit lurking in man's complex of mechanism and mystery. Most of the superlatives applied by philosophic critics to good books refer to this essential quality of the great art of literature. It heartened Cicero when Caesar burst into Italy so roughly; exalted Milton in his blindness; came to many plain men on the King James version; kept Shelley afloat upon a sea of sex (and he drowned in its company); has been known to subdue even the growing pains of the undergraduate. I write lightly of what I, in common with a multitude of others, believe to be, like religion and hope, one of the few necessities men do not share with beasts. In a generation where size seems hopelessfuly confused with excellence, and civilization is written in terms of the advertising pages, the spiritual reserve in great books may not need defending, but must be constantly sought out and interpreted.



—*SRL, Arni.*

Henry Canby: "Neither readers nor reviewers can live on mountain tops or in cloisters."

Every teacher and editor and scholar from Plato down has been a prophet of the religion of literature, until essayists and other preachers have come to praise books only because they can raise and solace the bedraggled soul. Yet this literature of the spirit to which belong mighty musings from the past, and recollected beauty, and all that deals with man not here and now but in his eternal aspects, whether as Prometheus or Falstaff, all this is a literature of retreat. Those who enjoy it are for the moment old. The drums have sounded for them; they have left the street, left the battle, stepped out of the immediacies of life, are looking on, not into, experience. Now they understand, now they appreciate, now they think of race and family, love and truth, romance and beauty, all the attributes which we see in living only when we have time to meditate upon them.

Indeed a mild pessimism is necessary if literature in these classic aspects is to yield its best. The reader must be no Faust, but willing to leave the moment because memory is more fair. The dreamer has realized his incapacity, the vigorous have become weary, the efficient have learned a passive resignation before they read best in this aspect of literature. Good books in their eternal function are entrances into the life of the spirit, but they are also swinging doors leading from crowded corridors into seclusion.

It takes more than good reporting and skilled technique to make literature of this quality. We have had it in our century and a half of American literature—not often, but in greater proportion than has been supposed, except by inflamed patriots. Homegrown thought has advantages which sometimes compensate for other merits. Thoreau and Whitman knew more than Carlyle and Tennyson of the antidotes for *hysteria Americana.* If *The Saturday Review,* in its purpose to uphold literature, can help to set right the curiously warped estimates of so-called American classics, it will earn a right to subsistence.

* * *

So much for the timeless literature

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of retreat, books in their noblest function of self-heal and illumination. But neither readers nor reviewers can live on mountain tops or in cloisters. New York keeps growing in despite of wise maxims in Plato's "Republic," and "Macbeth" and "Lear" stay true but remote, while the struggle for a militant and blatant egoism involves the living. Every book, whatever its potentiality of lasting wisdom, exists in its own social complex and helps to explain it. Therefore, to search for eternal value only in literature and to disregard the rest, is inhuman and a little ridiculous, like trying to understand all ages without experiencing one's own. Good new books especially whether they contain great art or little, are news of human nature as it is at the moment. We do not read a new book because we think it will live, we read it because it is alive—if it lives it is because there was life enough to endure the change of seasons, but that is not our only, not even our chief concern, which is with today not tomorrow. To paraphrase—

> If it be not good for me
> What care I how good it be.

This is the timely view of literature, and vigorous reviews and active-minded readers cannot escape it, even by trying.

For an illustration, consider the literary aspects of this country, sprawling in its greatness. Just after the Revolution, the so-called Hartford wits, who should have been called the Yale Literati, celebrated in pompous heroics the leadership of the new United States. Freedom and Liberty and Opportunity and a half dozen other capitalizations were to conduct Europe and the World into a godlike Future, where man was to realize his glorious Destiny under a Universal Republic. No one writes that way now except in the bunkum of inferior statesmen. Nevertheless, the United States has become after all a model for the world—and I do not mean in virtue, wealth, kind of government, or mould of character. In the United States, that form of society which we still call democratic for want of a juster word, has reached its fullest development, and every civilized country is year by year borrowing, adapting, self-developing, with an equivalent society as an end almost in sight. England has Americanized in this sense almost unbelievably since 1900. The new countries of Eastern Europe are, one hears, more rapid still.

Of course, it is not properly speaking an Americanization; it is the result of the industrial revolution working out into a changed life for every individual. Politics are secondary; pure democracy is no nearer than before; but mass production, mass knowledge, mass communication have produced a society where every man can move, eat, read, hear with all the power that results, although wisdom is just as hard to attain as ever and self-control much harder. A vulgar society of great energy, flexible, hysterical, confused, is the outcome: a society of infinite possibilities for slow good, or rapid evil. If you are optimistic you call it the emancipation of the common man; if pessimistic, you may quote Polybius on Rome—

> The violent influx of prosperity will produce a more extravagant standard of living and an excessively keen competition between individuals . . . As these tendencies develop, a process of deterioration will be initiated . . . When they are inspired by a sense of injustice, by the material greed of some of their masters, and with a false conceit by the insincerity of others in pursuit of a political career, . . . the masses become so intensely exasperated and so completely guided by passion that they repudiate all subordination to or even equality with the upper classes and identify the interests of the community with their own. When this point is reached the commonwealth acquires the flattering appellations of Liberty and Democracy, while it is subject to the appalling reality of the "despotism of the crowd."

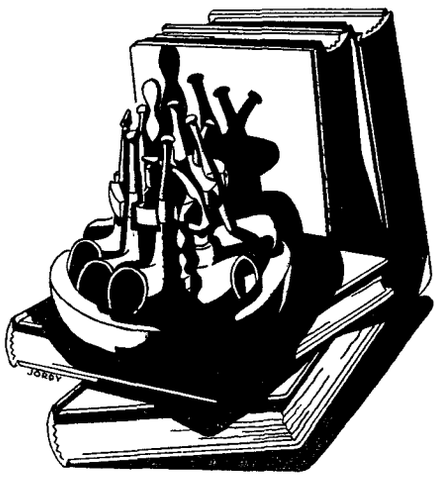
And this society, for evident reasons, developed first and most fully in America. We alone had broken through our conventions to go pioneering in a strange environment; we alone had boundless physical opportunities open for a while to all; we alone had a political and social system with small resistance to mass control; we alone through immigration have a cosmopolitan population bound by no single tradition but the American which is liberal and elastic to an extreme.

* * *

I am neither praising the American mass civilization nor condemning it. Nor do I mean that having studied its blare and bustle one knows all, or even the most important, facts about the United States. My single point is that here is a type of civilization of obvious interest, and that literature must and will report it. I say report it; literature will try to make art of it also, and may succeed, is certainly in some measure already succeeding. But we Americans who read, and we who edit, cannot remain indifferent to the mere reporting. Every attempt to present it in history, sociology, psychology, biology, as well as in pure literature or pure comedy, must be interesting, must be for a Review as vital as the enduring values of literature.

This literature in its aspect of timeliness is active, not passive, which does not mean that it is better or truer than timeless literature but rather the reverse. It is a literature of men whose drums are still beating onward; it reports the turmoil, not meditation; admixture, not refinement; expectation, not memory, what is momentarily apparent rather than what is necessarily true. Not to read it is not to live now, however much one may dip into essential life. In extremes, the contrast is between the newspapers, the comic strips, the movies against Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton. But the means differ only as between today and yesterday—Ring Lardner, Hergesheimer, Robert Frost versus Cooper, Irving, Hawthorne; or between history in literature and literature as art—Sinclair Lewis and Edna St. Vincent Millay.

I shall drop then in conclusion those somewhat formal terms, timeless and timely, and say that criticism, which is part of the living fabric of contemporary literature, must be keenly aware of both past and present, and a partisan of both. It must be like a modern university where one seeks Principles, but also works in laboratories of immediate experience amidst the vivid confusion of experiment. In one guise a graybeard philosopher searching for the Best, but also in the mood of youth, watching the three-ringed show under the great tent of Today—yet discriminating in both—that is the double function of criticism and this Review.



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The Saturday Review
of Literature
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Henry Seidel Canby, Amy Loveman — *Associate Editors*
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NOTES ON *SRL*

CREDOS are almost mandatory on an occasion such as this, but a credo at best is an awkward affair. There is something presumptuous and contrived about it, like a basket of artificial fruit. You are asked to state your philosophy of life, and before you know it, you are heavily involved in something resembling parlor games, stringing a few phrases together and trying to turn them deftly enough so that the thing will actually sound like something worth framing, but what is being described is generally an outlook on life that would be nice if you could have it but which usually lives and dies in the phrases themselves.

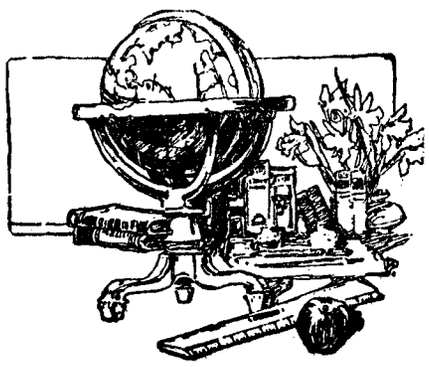
We should like to be able to state here the credo of *The Saturday Review,* but we are afraid to tackle it: we might sound too much like a combination of Elbert Hubbard and Jeanne D'Arc. But since some statement of purpose would seem to be in order, perhaps we should talk here in general terms of the magazine's history, what has been learned, what remains to be learned, our hopes for it, our plans for it.

The Saturday Review began as an experiment—which, to a large extent, it still is. The experiment was to determine whether America could support a literary review; all the previous evidence had been against it. Indeed, *The Saturday Review's* own experience for a long time seemed to bear out what the magazine world had accepted as a truism—no "literary" publication, no magazine of "ideas," could live without a subsidy, especially if it was issued as a weekly, where overhead costs are multiplied. Part of the same theory held that the only way for a weekly to succeed was as a mass magazine, offered to the public at a price lower than the actual per unit cost, the difference as well as the profit to be measured in terms of large advertising revenue.

For a long time—too long, we admit—the theory held water. One by one, magazines concerned with the arts or with opinion were hopefully and even auspiciously started, only to be snuffed out. *The Dial, The Freeman, The Bookman,* and any number of others, all of them excellent products and deserving of a robust existence, made strong but eventually fruitless attempts to disprove the notion that in a nation of well over a hundred million people there was no room for intellectual periodicals. It was subsidy or bust.

We make no bones about the fact that for many years a subsidy kept *The Saturday Review* going. And even with a subsidy, there were times when the magazine was in a more precarious position than it is comfortable now to recall. Five years ago, all subsidy was cut off and it was make or break. For the next two and a half years, it seemed as though it would be the latter. There were weeks when only the disposition of a printer to be influenced by honeyed words without any real honey in back of them kept the magazine alive. For a long stretch, our contributors kept us going by allowing the magazine to apply their fees to a bill for paper stock or for postage.

In this epithelial fashion we hung on from week to week. But during this long period of tightrope walking, when we were forced to execute maneuvers that would make the circus Wallendas seem like tired porch-sitters, we became increasingly convinced that the magazine could be made to support itself. We were certain that there was a large and growing market for a literary magazine that would be concerned with ideas as well as with books, that would see books not as ends in themselves but as part of an activist and political world. Such a magazine would try to deal with serious issues without taking itself too seriously; would try to war against stuffed-shirtism (we hoped to be able to avoid the possible danger of self-injury involved in such a crusade); would recognize that good books, like plants, demanded certain conditions in order to exist, and we wanted our magazine to work for the type of intellectual and political climate in which this book life would be possible.



To a certain extent, of course, this general approach had already represented the underlying philosophy of the magazine, especially since Spring, 1940, when the fall of France had the effect of blasting us out of whatever ivory tower we may have been in (and it is doubtful whether even blasting can get us back in again). But we were in no position then to strike out boldly so long as we were on such shaky ground financially. We had long-range projects we wanted to initiate, several different series of special issues we wanted to undertake, and we needed the wherewithal not only for editorial expansion but for much-needed business operations. It was like trying to start a car on a cold day with a run-down battery; we just couldn't get it to kick over without new juice.

FOR about six months, we searched for someone to help recharge our battery. We weren't looking for a subsidy this time—we never wanted to be dependent on that again—just enough to get the machine started. The big break came in June, 1942, when we were able to get a group together—"The Saturday Review Associates"—which would enable the magazine to pay off its accumulated debts with enough left over to move ahead modestly on a new program. The word "modestly" is the literal truth. Our recharged battery was designed to carry us for six months—no more. After that, we had to be self-starting and self-sufficient.

As it turned out, the battery was more than adequate. Wherever that mythical and magical corner may be that they say you have to turn was turned in November, 1942. Since that time, there has been a steady acceleration in our financial progress and the accountant tells us that Dunn & Bradstreet place us in the same credit rating category as the Loose Wiles Biscuit Company and the Harlem Coal and Fuel Corporation, which we take to be no small shakes. With all our high plans, we confess that the success of *SRL* has astonished us more than anyone else. We feel awkward and almost embarrassed about it all; it's a little hard to get used to dipping your pen in black ink, and we still have to touch the new Venetian blinds in the office to make sure they're real. Circulation today is at 50,000 with the prospect that it may be twice that figure once paper rationing is lifted.

The future? For some time now we have been planning to broaden the scope of the magazine. If things work out as we hope they will, *The Satur-*

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day Review will broaden its cultural coverage to include Britain. Regular transatlantic flights after the war will make it possible to ship plastic plates to London, with the prospect that the magazine may appear simultaneously in both countries. There has been some talk, too, of a separate *Saturday Review* for Latin America, but not enough has crystallized on that to warrant any specific statements.

Apart from all these fancy plans, we anticipate some tough sledding, though not necessarily of a financial nature. We think we are going to have a series of battles on our hands over the broad question of censorship and suppression, already mushrooming into a serious threat to all printed matter. We shouldn't be surprised, moreover, if we were to have the fight of our lives with the United States Post Office. The postal decision to ban *Esquire* from the second class mails has been confirmed by the lower courts. *Esquire* plans to carry the fight to the Supreme Court; if it loses, about a dozen magazines, of which *The Saturday Review* is one, may expect that an attempt might be made under this precedent to exclude them from the second-class mailing privilege. The curious thing about the *Esquire* ban is that, while the case originally centered about obscenity, it has wound up as a dispute over "public service," for the Post Office now claims that only periodicals which perform "a public service" are entitled to the use of the second-class mailing privilege. And apparently the Post Office is going to have the authority to say which magazines perform such service and which do not.

Nothing would please us more than to be able to take down that impossible and unseemly inscription sprawled across the façade of the Post Office Building in New York which rambles on about rain and shine and couriers on their appointed rounds, or something to that effect, and substitute the following from John Milton:

> Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. . .

N. C.

THEN AND NOW

WHEN *The Saturday Review* was born in the aftermath of the First World War it was into a literature that was already shaking down into introspective mood. The bewildered amazement which had greeted the onset of conflict, the seeking for information to make understandable the incredible misfortune which had befallen the world, the avid interest in the actual events of battle and the reactions of the men who were waging it, the first shocked realization after the fighting was over that America itself was not the elysium it had seemed, and the scramble to strip it of its vestments of perfection had yielded by 1924 to less excited attitudes. The country was chastened in spirit and still more or less iconoclastic, but it had caught its breath after the first splutter of astonishment and indignation and was proceeding in critical fashion to take stock of its past and its present. The war, in its events and post-bellum problems, still cast a long shadow over literature, but the individual, so long swamped in the mass, was reasserting his right to attention and, projected on the screen of the new science of psychoanalysis, was again becoming a focus of interest.

The war, it seemed, had done two things to man; it had at once minimized him and sharpened his mental awareness. As G. I. Joe, as we should call him today, he was but a particle in a vast whole of endeavor which to achieve its ends had to reck nothing of how he was expended; his was not to question why, his was but to do or die. But as the survivor of a successful war which presumably had made the world safe for democracy he was an aroused human being whose experience had led him to query the validity of his pre-war assumptions and whose skepticism had determined him to accept nothing without investigation. He extended his doubts and his probings into the state of his country as a whole, into the figures of the national pantheon, and into the emotions and motivations of himself and his fellows as separate members of society. The sanction of custom meant little to him, and he toppled from their pedestals the idols of a past day and broke through the conventional wrappings of his own ego. The authors of his period did not create his interest in biography and psychology; they merely gave expression to the profound instinct that was stirring in him for insight into those springs of action and feeling which had brought his world of security in ruins about his head.

For it had been a world of security. It is difficult now, after the misery of the years that have intervened, to realize how sincerely the men and women of the first decade of the twentieth century believed that humanity was on the march to happiness. Much has been written of the smugness of those pre-war years, but far too little has been made of the honest enthusiasm which underlay that complacency, of the fervor of the humanitarianism which found awkward expression in the fumbling attempts of amateurs to better society and which surged into militant action in the organized strivings of labor, the struggle for votes for women, and the battle against corrupt government. If the influence of religion had begun to wane and fewer men lived "in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection unto eternal life" more men than ever before believed that the earthly paradise was over the edge of the morrow and that the world was advancing to a day when the downtrodden and the poor would inherit at least some of the good things of the earth, and when the nations would live in perpetual amity. The Nobel Peace Prize, the League to Enforce Peace and cognate organizations, these embodied the hopes and the aims of the men of good will both in this country and abroad.

THE unbelief with which Americans watched Europe drifting into war in those July days of 1914, the shock of horror with which they saw the armies hurled against each other have had no counterpart in the dismay and despair at the advent of the Second World War. For in the earlier experience they had bitterly learned that man was not risen above the savage and that for all his veneer of civilization he could not stay the forces of evil when the will to power possessed them, and the lesson, bitten deep into consciousness, for all the nightmare incredibility of a second war within the span of a single generation deprived the new war of the element of impossibility which had invested the old.

We stress the point for the bearing it has not on the past but on the future. For the First World War set men to searching their souls while the Second turned them to examine their intelligence and the tenor of their intellectual processes. It was the whole fabric of civilization which was under diagnosis from 1914 to 1924, the complex of traditions and shibboleths and taboos, the web of treaties and customs and diplomatic conventions which formed the philosophy whereby men lived and nations conducted their relations. But in 1939, when the unbelievable happened again and Europe went to war, it was the flaws in the logic which had governed their actions (conditioned, of course, by the yearning to avoid war born of the knowledge of its sufferings) which engaged

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inquiry. And as the onset and existence of war produced different reactions in the two periods, so its impact upon the post-war period is apt to be different.

The First World War brought devastating disillusionment to America. Not only did it strip it of its sense of isolation from the political problems of Europe, and worse still shatter its confidence that the American way of life and the American belief in democracy were a lamp to all the world, but it shook its faith in its own manner of living and caused it to see ugliness where beauty had been before. To be sure, certain elements of the country lived on for a time unaware of a change in its mental climate but the articulate few who wrote its books and the literate many who read them saw the land of the free suddenly become the home of a people bound and restricted in its mental and social attitudes, languishing in the dulness of a standardized civilization, living in hypocritical observance of outworn conventions. "The sad young men" who had their say in those years indulged perhaps unduly in despair, but they fought a good fight, even if they carried it to exaggeration, and they changed the outlook of a generation. "The new freedom," so old a freedom now as to be matter of course, was their work, though already the books in which they broached it lie outdated.

From an era of self-denigration America passed into one of crass self-indulgence and reckless prodigality only to move on to the scarifying experience of depression. And depression did away with the post-war disillusion of America by making the humdrum and uniform civilization its critics had denounced appear secure and serene and desirable. America had run a gamut of experience which left it a sadder but a wiser nation.

And in that very cycle of experience lies the hope of a less embittered return to the peace-time world after the Second World War than after the First. The blinders have been off the nation's eyes for some twenty years now. The shock of disillusion, the bitterness of disappointment, the heat of controversy cannot be repeated, for they have no ignorance to spring from. It is to the future, not to the past that people will turn. For perhaps the first time in history a generation which has failed is given a second chance, opportunity of its fearful errors to garner guidance for fresh action, and, blessed hope, safety for generations yet unborn. The burden of caution and ripe reflection and good judgment is upon it and its spokesmen, the writers. It was to the writers who were tearing down their idealistic picture of America that readers were turning when twenty years ago *The Saturday Review* came into being. Already the signs are many that it will be to construction not demolition that the writers of the coming post-war period will address themselves. The rights of the underprivileged, the question of intolerance, the redressing of injustice—these are the problems which are already engaging their attention. The better world, it is for that we all pray. On to it!

Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt.

A. L.

SRL

By Leonard Bacon

LIKE poverty the *SRL*
Makes bedfellows as strange as Hell.
The endemic fauna's numerous.
The bookworm (ptinus brunneus),
All aspects of man's thought infesting
And swallowing all without digesting,
The nameless and eccentric breed
Of "those who write but never read,"
Beasts that soar and birds that crawl,
Night things that moan or caterwaul,
"House critics" chirping cheerless chirps,
Supermen and supertwirps,
With "Polar Bore" and Utterfly
Together in one column lie.
A pun, than that, more fully blown,
Even you, reader, have not known.

As it appears, for twenty years
The *Review* has trafficked in "idears,"
Some good, some bad, some false, some true,
And what's called old, and what's called new.
If asked to name the sheet's main quality
I'd say that it was hospitality.
Here "notions not as yet exploded"
Shock front to front with the outmoded.
The forties here the twenties twit
With passion camouflaged like wit,
Oblivious what solemn court is
Biding its time to try the forties.
That writ will run. That axe will cut.
Fortuna forties adjuvat—but—!
Here breeds revolt, here custom frowns
At literary ups and downs.
Here classicist and realist
Each other's tails with gusto twist
And praise and blame and cheer and gibe.
Cool compliment, hot diatribe,
In spring and summer, fall and winter,
Distress the overburdened printer.

However, that's all right by me.
I thank whatever Gods may be
I knew the sheet those years ago.
It was a pleasant thing to know,
Canby was there, and there Benét,
There Morley, each in his own way
Combating hard necessity
To pay the rent—and sometimes me,
A trinity condemned to sit
In the mouth of a financial Pit.
They fought it out and made good cheer
On a shoestring many a weary year
Of hurry, worry, fear, and fag
While Amy Loveman held the bag.
I do not know how it was done.
All I know is I've had fun.

For it is pleasure wholly proved
To write about what one has loved,
To praise nobility one finds,
"To feel variety of minds,"
To see far off a young star soar
Aloft the night, to hear the roar
Of controversy "clean forgot
In the next issue" like as not.
The editor knows how to shelve it
With the steel hand in the glove of velvet.

O you, my betters and my peers,
They were fine sport, those twenty years
Of moil and toil, strife and routine,
With grief and laughter laced between.
And though the times lower grim and hateful,
I can remember to be grateful.
La Rochefoucauld, who was not dumb,
Based gratitude on good to come.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Some rough calculations by the editors the other day produced some interesting figures in connection with this page. In twenty years, some 36,000 *letters have been addressed to this department. Of these, some* 6,200 *have been published. A representative cross-section of these letters, as they have appeared over the years, follows:*

Sacrilege

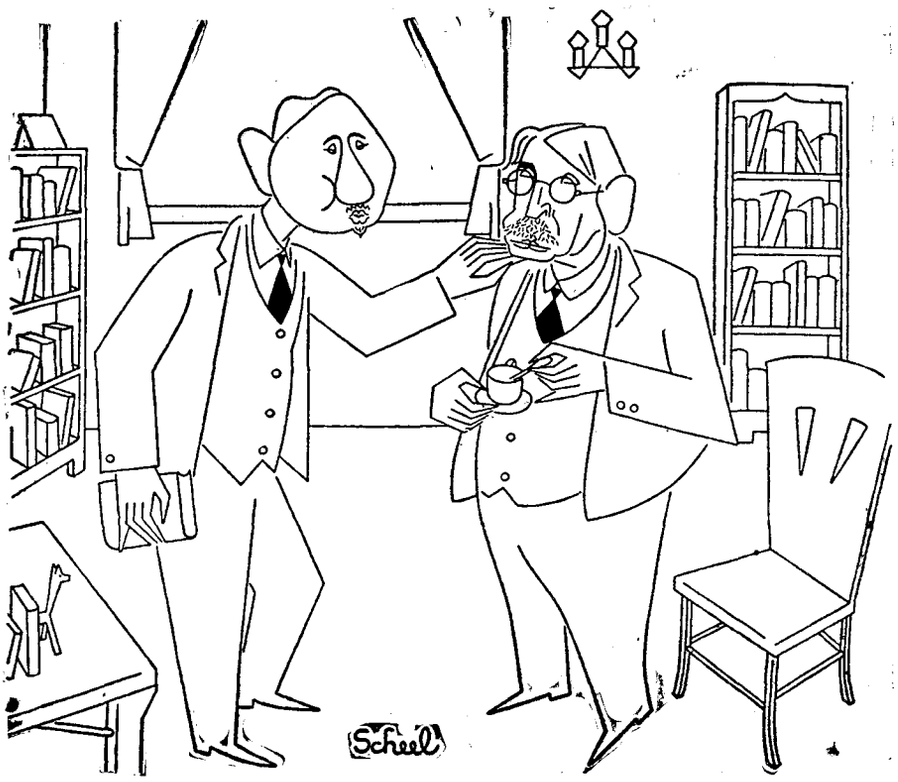
(SEPTEMBER 11, 1926)

SIR: More than fifty years ago Frederick Nietzsche remarked that we moderns were constantly occupied in reducing what is noble in life to the trite and commonplace. The unsightly process would seem to be continual and ubiquitous. The sober dignity that encompassed the lives of our fathers is no more.

Just as the inhuman flickering mechanics of the cinematograph is supplanting the more authentic appeal of the theatre, and the automatic modern business-office replacing the older and more personal methods of merchandise traffic, so to those accustomed to follow the trends of current literature there can be noted today a definite inclination to popularize and cheapen the great books of the past. And especially is this unfortunate disposition to be observed in England and America where there appear from time to time writers of real understanding who feel no shame in pandering to the prevailing irreverence of their age. Bernard Shaw has brought Joan of Arc and many another celebrated character out of history "up to date," and Mr. Van Loon has not hesitated to do the same dubious service for men and women in the old Bible stories. The former can be forgiven, however, by virtue of his sharp, liberating wit and the latter because of the apparent honesty of his intention. But when there enters upon this same field a critic whose work we have been accustomed to listen to with respect, and when the book of this critic becomes a "best-seller," receiving enthusiastic plaudits from both sides of the Atlantic, we feel impelled, with however hoarse a voice, to register some kind of protest. Surely there are certain figures in the stored legends of the human race that should be immune from trivial treatment.

Does Dr. John Erskine realize that when he renders vulgar the figure of Helen of Troy he does outrage to a myth, to a memory, which has cast a spell over the imaginations of the men and women of our Western world for nearly three thousand years? How he has had the audacity to desecrate, with a viler desecration than Paris was guilty of, his "lass unparalleled" is more than I know! To every person sensitive to traditional culture in Europe and America a certain inviolability has seemed in the past to hedge about the memory of this tragic woman, so long dead. And yet here comes this clever Professor pushing his way through the echoing galleries of antiquity for the sole purpose of translating the matchless wife of Menelaus into something that tallies with his own conception of suburban domesticity. I dare venture to say that such a book as "The Private Life of Helen of Troy" has done more to debase the esthetic perception of the reading public than the widespread distribution of the most scandalous volume of pornography to be picked up on the Quai Voltaire.

In these "lonesome latter years" it is by no means an easy matter to preserve in its cool purity that age-old Homeric vision of life and yet such a vision is most surely the true vision, and one that it should be our unfaltering object to sustain in all the clear, pristine depth of its poetic simplicity. The souls of us moderns no longer have free passage; like seabirds whose shining feathers have become clogged with a foul oil, we float aimlessly to and fro amid the shifting insincerities and affectations of our immediate environment. We are gulled far too easily by the importunate illusion of each feverish day as it passes into eternity, and it is only by becoming more and more familiar with the inspired wisdom of great men as it has been preserved to us in books that we can hope to attain to a spiritual attitude, a calm, not wholly unworthy of our heritage. But what if the ambrosial stream of Oceanus is to be tainted at its very source!



***SRL's* first cartoon, July 22, 1933, was less cartoon than commentary. It caricatured Will Durant and John Dewey. Will Durant: "They tell me you're a philosopher, too, Mr. Dewey."**

A critic in the *Westminster Gazette* writes "it will have more effect in humanizing the classic civilizations than most erudite treatises." Woe to Columbus! Is there a single sentence in Mr. Erskine's version that recaptures that essential nobility of style which is in every line of the Iliad and the Odyssey? The whole point of his performance, as far as I am able to see, consists in a controlled, facetious endeavor to provoke an amused smile on Philistine lips.

The affair of every critic of letters should be to educate ignorant and crass minds into a lively appreciation of that heightened sense of consciousness which the genius of great poets is able to reveal. It should on no account be their business to reduce poetry to prose, to drag the fair, shy, unravished body of poetry, for sport, all wet and shimmering, out of her hidden pool in the rocks, merely to see how she would manage to accommodate herself to the superficial values of our forlorn epoch.

The book ends as it begins with deep offense. One of the most beautiful and moving passages in all secular literature occurs in the fourth book of the Odyssey. It is when Telemachus, and the son of Nestor, and Menelaus, and Argive Helen herself, suddenly feel their hearts stirred within them "with the desire for lamentation" when they remember the dread disaster that had been brought to life "far on the ringing plains of windy Troy." And at that moment of august silence, in that

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—*Reprinted from* SRL, *November 5, 1938.*

"There isn't room in this house for belles-lettres and me both."

stately palace hall, white-armed Helen, the daughter of Zeus, the fairest among women, brings to the still group of mortals who for a moment of time would seem to have comprehended, would seem to have taken upon themselves, the sorrows of the whole world, a bowl of drugged wine with power "to lull all pain and anger in their hearts and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow."

Even when confronted by the unsurpassed beauty of that legendary scene Mr. Erskine still finds himself capable of indulging in his frivolous innuendoes. He is not one to exclaim with good Doctor Faustus in a moment of frenzied intellectual exultation,

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium!
>
> * * *
>
> Oh! thou art fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;

He finds it safer and doubtless more profitable to exercise his art of facetious detachment and end his book with his customary light touch. "He took it from her, his hand touched hers, and she smiled at him. It was as she had said; he forgot all his sorrows—as it seemed, forever. But the magic he knew, was not in the wine. Menelaus was busy with his food on the other side of the table."

LLEWELYN POWYS.

Dorchester, England.

War Guilt

(SEPT. 24, 1927)

SIR: I am prompted by Mr. John Bakeless's review of G. P. Gouch's "Recent Revelations of European Diplomacy," in your issue of August 27, to put two questions which have for some time been on my mind.

1. Have the "post-war revelations" disproved the common belief (1) that the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia was deliberately formulated in terms that Serbia could not accept without surrender of her national independence; and (2) that in sending this ultimatum the Austrian Government was justified in believing that she was assured of the support of the German Government?

2. If responsibility is shifted from the immediate agents to "the international anarchy which they inherited," does one not employ a principle which makes individual culpability meaningless?

My suggestion is, briefly, that there are always conditions favorable to the conflagration of war, and that the "responsible" party must therefore be that individual or group who drop the spark at the crucial moment. Can the Austrian and German authorities be acquitted of having consciously performed an act which make a local war almost inevitable, and, in view of the state of Europe, a general war highly probable?

I am sure that others as well as myself will be grateful for light from Mr. Bakeless on these points.

RALPH BARTON PERRY.

Cambridge, Mass.

Allan Upward

(DEC. 17, 1927)

SIR: Such is fame. The anonymous reviewer in your issue of October 22 apparently does not know that Allan Upward is dead. And from all I have ever seen in print it would seem that no one has ever understood Upward's suicide. Knowing him as I did, and considering the date of the tragedy it appears to me that he very probably shot himself in a simple fit of disgust on hearing that the Swedish Academy had awarded the Nobel Prize to G. B. Shaw.

Considering the seriousness of Upward's thought when he was serious, *i.e.*, not playing the fool in journalism or cheap fiction, and considering the fundamental triviality of Shaw beneath his fly-catching intellectualism, the disgust was probably perfectly natural.

EZRA POUND.

Rapallo, Italy.

Mr. Sinclair and Mr. Lippmann

(APRIL 7, 1928)

SIR: My old friend, Walter Lippmann, like all the other critics, says I am hopeless, because I acquired some ideas twenty-five years ago, and have not changed them. My refusal implies a belief on my part that I have been right all this time, and that is very egotistical and presumptuous. How much more modest and humble if I could follow the example of my old friend, Walter Lippmann, who resigned from the Socialist Party away back in the nineteen-naughties, because it wasn't revolutionary enough, and now objects to it because it is too revolutionary!

A large part of his long article is devoted to a criticism of my novels, because they do not give a true picture of America; they are not accurate. Then, as an illustration of how to be accurate, my friend Walter tells the public that he has not read a novel of mine since the first time Debs ran for President. That historical event occurred in 1900, and my first novel was published in 1902. So your readers can judge how well qualified Walter is to judge the accuracy of my books.

It is very bad taste of me to enter into these discussions with my critics, but Walter has provided me with the excuse. He explains that I am a saint, and not, therefore, expected to be polite. So everybody will understand that I am just being my usual self, if I take up the question whether or not I do really give the Marxian workingmen of Europe a dependable picture of the United States. Walter says I don't, and he ought to know, because he lives here, and the Marxian workingmen of Europe live elsewhere.

That seems to imply that everybody in America agrees with Walter. But, unfortunately for his argument, that isn't the case. The same mail which brought me Walter's article, brought me also a letter from Bolton Hall. To be sure, Bolton Hall was born in Ireland, but then he has lived in the United States for sixty-one years; he was educated at Princeton, an entirely respectable place, and is a practising lawyer in New York, another entirely respectable place. It seems as if his letter were written especially for the purpose of answering my friend Walter. He says:

"'Oil!' is immense: it ought to be advertised as a practical money-grabbers' hand-book. Besides that, I find it very 'inciting,' as my little boy used to

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say. I have had large and intimate intercourse with all the kinds of people in the book, and can certify that not one, so far as I have got (p. 306), is overdrawn or distorted. I think I could put names from my acquaintances to probably every one of them. I'd recommend it to any young person who sighs to get rich rather than any of the 'Success' systems—and I know them practically all. You are doing more to stir up the people than Bernard Shaw, and in a way that far more of them can grasp."

I am going to send a copy of "Oil!" to my friend, Walter Lippmann, with my inscription on the fly-leaf, asking him to read it, and give me one more chance—the first since 1900 which was before I started!

UPTON SINCLAIR.

Don Marquis on Rabbits

(SEPT. 28, 1934)

SIR: The poem in the latest review, "Song of the Rabbits Outside the Tavern," by Elizabeth Coatsworth, is too utterly charming, original, and even touching for words. One night when I was about sixteen years old (which makes it forty years ago) I shot a rabbit in the moonlight at the edge of the woods; and the sense of what she got into this poem flooded over me, and I never shot anything again (not even a rabbit).

DON MARQUIS.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In connection with the magazine's tenth anniversary, thirty-six prominent authors gave their "estimates" of the magazine. We took, and still take, particular pride in the following four letters which we reprint below without in any way committing the authors to a ten-year extension of their encomiums.*

"Character, Tact, and Acuteness"

SIR: Each time that I have had occasion to read this noted weekly, I have come away with the impression that, thanks to an editorial direction of exceptional ability and breadth of view, it takes rank not only with the outstanding literary organs of America, but with the leading reviews of the world. At this time of intellectual perplexities and confusion it is America itself which one must congratulate on a periodical which follows and interprets literary events with so much character, tact, and acuteness. From the bottom of my heart I hope that the decade on which it is now entering will see its task, never more difficult than today, as well fulfilled as the last, and that it will meet then as now with the acclaim and success it deserves.

THOMAS MANN.

Küssnacht-Zürich.

"Material for Literary History"

SIR: My feeling is that a future historian who might wish to review the literary life of the decade just past would find virtually all the needed material in the files of *The Saturday Review* for this period. That is to say, these files constitute a most important historical document; the historian would find in them, not only the literary feeling and opinion of their time, but also the very life itself of their day.

This life, moreover, would not be a local one, but, on the contrary, cosmopolitan; for the field covered would be of universal extent. In other words, the historian just imagined would here find considered virtually all that has been considered in the books of this period and would thus have before him, condensed, the decade's essential human thought so far as it is in the power of print to express it.

BOOTH TARKINGTON.

Kennebunkport, Maine.

A Telegram

SIR: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE BUSINESS OF A CRITICAL REVIEW IS TO EXPLAIN BOOKS, TO RELATE BOOKS TO LIFE STOP FOR IN BOOKS, GOOD OR BAD, CONTEMPORARY LIFE IS PORTRAYED THROUGH ITS CHANGING PHILOSOPHY STOP THE FILES OF THE SATURDAY REVIEW WILL REVEAL TO THE HISTORIAN WHAT WRITERS WERE TRYING TO TELL THEIR READERS, WHAT READERS WERE DEMANDING OF THEIR WRITERS, AND SO WHAT WAS DEEPLY IN MAN'S HEART AS HE HURRIED OUT OF HIS OLD WORLD TO HIS VAST ADVENTURE IN THE NEW ONE.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

ROCHESTER, MINN.

"Kept Your Head Through a Literary Reign of Terror"

SIR: The lot of the liberal is hard. When, after the French Revolution, France swung back to the right, the pamphleteer, Sieyes, was suspected of having helped feed the guillotine. When asked categorically, "What did you do during the Terror?" he thundered back at his accusers, "I lived." To the same question, *The Saturday Review of Literature* can make the same answer.

There are those who accuse you of having steered a cowardly middle course. I have heard this lately from an earnest, honest, able writer of the proletarian school. This is unfair to the *Review*. You have not sided with any group; Humanism, or the religion of art, or, just now, the proletarian school; because to me you have had a conviction worth living for. It is this. There are some human activities, like philosophy, art, science, and above all literature, which can and should be carried on outside of and above politics, in the best sense of that preposition. You know that the writer who cannot recognize social injustice when he sees it cannot possibly be really significant. But you know also that "Huckleberry Finn" is a greater novel than "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in spite of the latter's far greater value as political propaganda.

I congratulate you upon having kept your head. May you keep it through another ten years of our literary Reign of Terror, if it must last that long, and may you live on to enjoy a serene old age.

CHRISTIAN GAUSS.

Princeton, N. J.

Sweet English

(APRIL 9, 1938)

SIR: In decent respect to our sweet English tongue, I must beseech you to explain to the office goat that when I used that shocking word in the final paragraph of my last editorial I was quoting Mr. Archibald MacLeish's well known poem, "Invocation to the Social Muse." What Mr. MacLeish wrote and what I borrowed from him is "We

—*Reprinted from* SRL, *May 4, 1935*

"When I start reading a book, I just forget everything else."

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are whores, Fraulein." It comes out "prostitutes," and I can't have that on my conscience.

BERNARD DEVOTO.

White Plains, N. Y.

The Question

(JULY 13, 1940)

SIR: After reading Mr. Lerner's review of Mr. Frank and Mr. Frank's review of Mr. Lerner, I find myself in utter confusion as to what these eminent men are talking about. The fault is mine of course and I confess it. But it would help me to understand their language if each of them would write down in plain English five things (numbered) which he wants the United States to do now under his grand philosophy of the universe. Thanks.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

New Milford, Conn.

. . . And the Answers

SIR: I feel too deeply indebted to the author of "Economic Interpretation of the Constitution," a book which nourished me and without which I might not readily have come to grips with American facts, to enter into a controversy with Charles A. Beard upon the facetious level of his letter. These are not jesting times. And when Mr. Beard says he does not know what Max Lerner and I are talking about, he is either joking in rather bad taste, or something has happened to his mind before which I prefer to keep silent. I have never felt that Mr. Beard had the imaginative equipment, the sensitivity to esthetic forms and to the imponderables of the human spirit, to be a deep interpreter of our country. And in the blindness of his present attitudes toward American immersement in a world at crisis, I see one of the end-results of his uncreative philosophy and vision. Nevertheless, I do not wish to forget his great contribution to the clarification of American facts. As to "the five things (numbered)" which he wants me to set down, I have recently written, "in plain English" I believe, my sense of our crisis, my project of a program for American action, and, implicitly, my criticism of Mr. Beard's position: it is contained in as brief form as possible in a volume entitled "Chart for Rough Waters." If Mr. Beard will read the book, I shall be honored to send him a copy.

WALDO FRANK.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Are you sure it was Charles Beard who wrote that letter? I seem to remember a book by Mr. Beard called "The Discussion of Human Affairs," published (if I can recall correctly—I do not have it with me now) in 1936, and lambasting the people who make the discussion of human affairs over-simple and over-rigid. Human societies, Mr. Beard tells us in that book, are very complex, very tangled, and our thinking about them must not too rudely break the web. Was that the same Charles Beard who now calls for simplicity, like any business man asking an intellectual to reduce his ideas to a page?

Mr. Frank's book was not about programs but about ideas: hence my review of it was also a review about ideas. If Mr. Beard wants to know what I think America should do concretely, he will find it in my review of his own book and Mr. Raymond Leslie Buell's in *The New Republic,* which I published under the title, "In the Hour of Decision." However, I am perfectly happy to give Mr. Beard my five-point program for America today:

1) Help Great Britain to the full extent of our capacity;

2) Face the realities of the war, understand that it is an outgrowth of a revolutionary situation, and that we shall not mend the world until we have fulfilled in our own way these revolutionary forces;

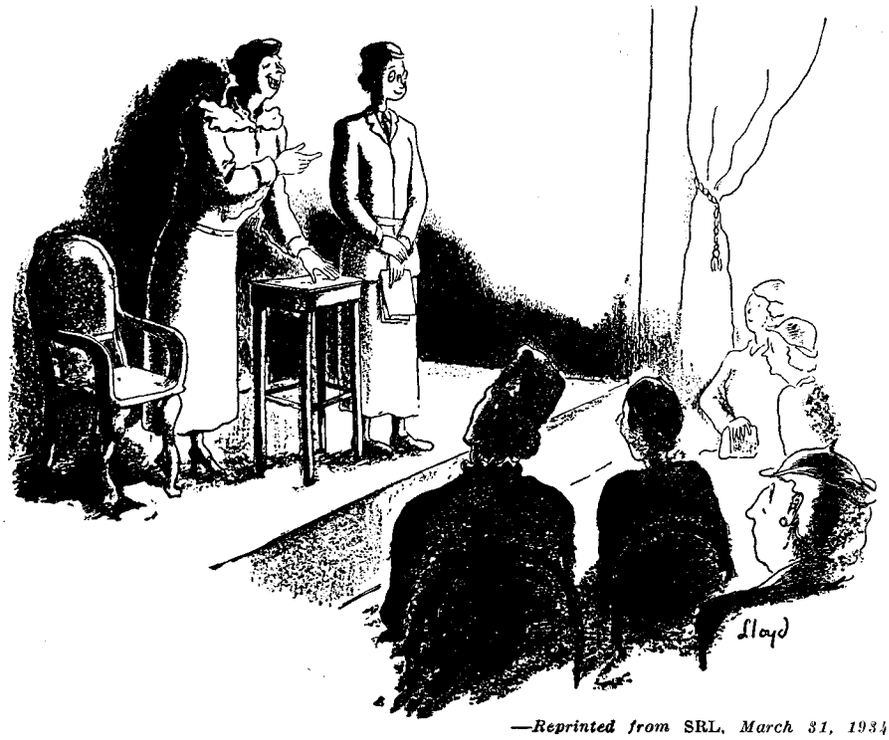
3) Adjust our thinking about government and economics in the light of the new revolutionary situation;

4) Reorganize our national defense as part of a vast effort of economic and administrative reorganization, so as to have a collectivist democracy;

5) Make democracy work at home, thereby fulfilling the aspirations of our young people, and insuring our national survival.

MAX LERNER.

Williams College,
Williamstown, Mass.



—*Reprinted from* SRL, *March 31, 1934.*

"Miss Plimpworth will tell us what three authors she'd take with her to a desert island."

Bernard Shaw on G.B.S.

(JAN. 2, 1943)

SIR: What a whopping review! [John Mason Brown's review of Hesketh Pearson's "G.B.S., a Full Length Portrait."] Decidedly, I am one of the greatest of living actors,—or imposters, if you prefer it.

G. BERNARD SHAW.

Ayot St. Lawrence.

Carbona in the Medicine Chest

(AUGUST 7, 1943)

SIR: In his Trade Winds Mr. Cerf makes the following observation: "The most notorious hypochondriac in bookish circles is Hendrik van Loon, etc., etc."

I have this moment made an examination of my medicine chest. It contains a bottle of Carbona, a box filled with old razor blades which the salvage people did not want, a can of a shaving lotion which George Biddle uses and which was wished upon me at a charity quiz in Stamford, a few dried-up mustard plasters from a bronchitis of a few years ago and a bottle of eye-wash. The only medicine I ever take is an occasional digitalis pill, which the doctor forces me to swallow for a slight heart ailment. When Jimmie does not forget that pill, I take it in the morning with my fifth cup of coffee. I never carry a pill or powder with me in my pocket and I could not do so as said pockets are filled with all sorts of paint boxes and odds and ends of pencils.

As for my peregrinations with the estimable George Bye, I occasionally (all too rarely) meet him on the train and then we walk together as far as his office. On our way, we pass a couple of haberdasheries, an art material store, Gristede's Bon Voyage store, a place where they sell knives and scissors, a music store and a few places where you can buy trunks and bags. None of them could (even if they wished to do so) sell me any drugs.

Finally, I am not much given to "bookish circles." I am too busy.

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON.

Old Greenwich, Conn.

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And Sudden Death . . .

GEORGE STEVENS

The following, reprinted from The Saturday Review *of April 30, 1938, is by the third editor of* The Saturday Review *in its history. Mr. Stevens is at present the managing editor and vice-president of J. B. Lippincott Co.*

IT used to be a maxim of book reviewing that a novelist who killed off his important characters by accident or unmotivated violence was writing mere melodrama, possibly good enough for Hollywood or the commercial magazines, but not Literature. A good novelist is not supposed to get himself out of a jam by putting the heroine into an automobile and running her against a tree. E. M. Forster, for instance, was roundly berated for two episodes of sudden death in novels which he wrote over twenty years ago —"The Longest Journey" and "Howard's End." It begins to look, from the numerous instances of murder, suicide, and other sudden and violent departures from our midst of characters in current fiction, as if Forster was twenty years ahead of his time.

It is unnecessary to count all the trees to make sure that they add up to a forest, so the following instances are listed at random, not by research. All of them concern important characters in the novels mentioned.

Steinbeck, "Of Mice and Men": one accidental murder, one "mercy killing."

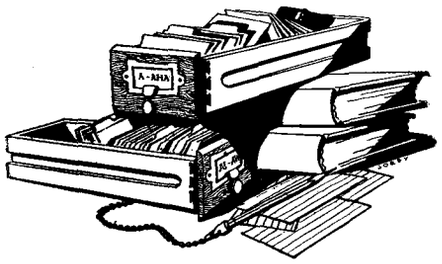
Hemingway, "To Have and Have Not": five deaths by shooting.

O'Hara, "Hope of Heaven": one accidental death by shooting.

Cain, "Serenade": two violent homicides.

O'Hara, "Butterfield 8": violent death of chief character, whether by murder, accident, or suicide undetermined.

Cain, "The Postman Always Rings



Twice": one attempted murder, one successful murder, one death in an automobile accident, one hanging.

Anderson, "Thieves Like Us": four deaths by shooting.

O'Hara, "Appointment in Samarra": one suicide by gas engine exhaust.

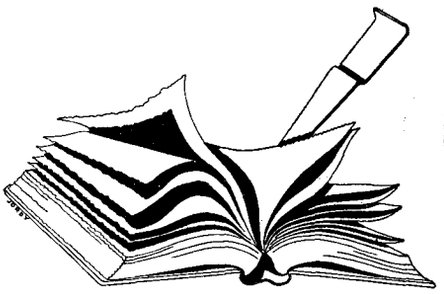
Not to mention William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, or the gangster cycle W. R. Burnett started ten years ago.

The foregoing list only very loosely represents any concerted "movement" in fiction. Some of the books are of a considerably higher quality than others; Steinbeck and Hemingway, for instance, are more important novelists than Cain and Anderson, with O'Hara somewhere in the middle. (There are good reviewers, however, who take James M. Cain very seriously.) Furthermore, "To Have and Have Not" is Hemingway's least effective novel, while "Of Mice and Men" is probably Steinbeck's best to date. Nevertheless, we have here, roughly assembled and with some variations, a nucleus of what is known as the hard-boiled school; they are in the opinion of many reviewers among the most readable novelists in America; and the looseness with which the list is made up emphasizes the unity of effect these novels have produced.

Intentionally or otherwise, they are all saying the same thing—that life *is* melodramatic. Some of the sudden and violent deaths enumerated above were carefully motivated, but more were not. Lennie, in "Of Mice and Men," killed Curley's wife by accident; accident was the point (as it was, also, in the two Forster novels). The shootings in "To Have and Have Not," "Thieves Like Us," and "Hope of Heaven," and the two murders in "Serenade," were all unpremeditated. No detective-story writer could get away with anything like that, but detective-story writers are not writing about life, and therefore have no excuse to break the conventions of fiction.

Hemingway was the first of these novelists to say that life is dangerous; it is the undertone of all his novels, like a moral lesson: "live dangerously or you may as well be dead." In the later novelists, particularly Steinbeck, the undertone changes slightly: "live dangerously, because you can't help yourself." Hemingway, of course, has always taken sides; that is, at least, the strong implication of the contempt he shows for those characters in his novels—from Latin Quarter drunks to overfed yachtsmen off Key West—who live in security. In most of the current novels, however, we are merely told that life *is* insecure, and you can take it or leave it. Something may hit you over the head any minute.

Where does this leave the reader? Well readers of books do not live in a vacuum; they also read newspapers. Melodrama is the news, it is in the air; and enough readers have had the edge taken off their sense of security to explain why there is an audience for the melodramatic novel. Back in 1929, when we were reading "All Quiet on the Western Front" and "A Farewell to Arms," we felt less personally concerned; the war was over. The death of Catherine Barkley in childbirth ("A Farewell to Arms") was, in its way, tragedy; more affecting, esthetically, than the shooting of Harry Morgan in "To Have and Have Not"; but the



shooting of Harry Morgan somehow makes us nervous. The difference between those two episodes clearly indicates the road which Hemingway has traveled in ten years; it does not, perhaps, represent an artistic advance; but his readers have unquestionably gone at least a piece of the road with him, whether they wanted to or not.

Perhaps these matters are only indirectly related to literary values. But the point is that melodramatic fiction does, however crudely at times, as far as technique is concerned, get across the idea that life is melodramatic. If you think the will of the individual is puny and ineffectual, you will inevitably write novels about characters to whom things happen, not about characters who make things happen. In the novels of the hard-boiled school, circumstances over which they have no control, or even influence, are making guinea-pigs of the individual characters. So "characterization" in the conventional sense—like motivation—cannot be expected of the melodramatic novelist. That is why we have so many novels told almost entirely in dialogue, without comment from the author; and so many other novels narrated in the first person, also without comment; either way, nothing but action and dialogue, never any analysis or introspection, never even any characters making important decisions. That explains also why the hard-boiled writers are so readable; nothing is more readable than action and dialogue, running fast and without interruption.

All this may well have its artistic limitations. It may represent a point of view that sees too little of life. But it is directly, inexorably related to that part of life which it does see. And every day it becomes just a little bit harder, for the novelist or the reader, to see beyond the melodrama.

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TRADE Winds

TWENTY YEARS AGO

THE FIRST ISSUE of *The Saturday Review of Literature* was dated August 2, 1924. It was published by Time, Inc., still in swaddling clothes itself, from a modest office at 236 East 39th Street, New York. An ad for *Time* reproduced the cover of Volume One, Number Seven, which featured a photograph of Mr. Winston Churchill with a sub-caption "I rest on the written record of my warning." When it isn't so hot, I mean to find out what that warning was.

The Saturday Review of Literature launched its career with feature reviews of David Garnett's "A Man in the Zoo" by Bill Benét', and Dale Collins's "Ordeal" by William McFee. Christopher Morley's first Bowling Green column described a visit to Mont Saint Michel; subsequent pieces were devoted to his further travels in France and England. Publishers' advertisements were not so flamboyant twenty years ago, but the books they featured compare favorably with the best of the current output. The fall of 1924 was a big season for the publishing world.

SCRIBNER'S WERE headlining Galsworthy's "The White Monkey" and Ring Lardner's "How to Write Short Stories." Putnam's announced Rockwell Kent's "Voyaging" and Arthur Weigall's "Cleopatra." Edna Ferber's "So Big" dominated the Doubleday, Page display. The D. Appleton Company offered Edith Wharton's "Old New York." Instead of printing four short stories in a single volume, some packaging genius at Appleton's conceived the notion of printing each in a separate volume, boxing the four little books in a gay, holly covered container, and pricing them at five dollars. The result was a sensational success. One of the four stories, "The Old Maid," was dramatized later by Zoë Akins and won a Pulitzer Prize.

HARCOURT, BRACE published E. M. Forster's "A Passage to India" twenty years ago. Other items on their exceptionally strong list were Powys's "Black Laughter" and Laurence Stallings's "Plumes." George Doran launched Arlen's "The Green Hat," and an unpredictable public began drooling over the mad Marches, who never were let off anything, and Boy Fenwick, who "died for purity" (the poor sap). Doran also sponsored that fall Don Stewart's "Mr. and Mrs. Haddock Abroad," and "Golf Without Tears," by a P. G. Wodehouse who had not yet begun figuring on his Adlon machine. Stokes heralded a brilliant newcomer: Louis Bromfield. His first novel was "The Green Bay Tree." Compare that book with his latest opus, "What Became of Anna Bolton?," and shed a tear for talent squandered.

A BRAND-NEW FIRM named Simon and Schuster devoted a full-page, back-cover ad to "The Eighth Lively Art," which turned out to be crossword puzzles ("350,000 copies in two months"). Alfred Knopf had the honor to announce "The Tattooed Countess," by Carl Van Vechten, and "Sandoval," by Thomas Beer. Macmillan featured Pearson's "Studies in Murder" and John Masefield's "Sard Harker." Houghton Mifflin were cleaning up with Anne Sedgwick's "The Little French Girl." Little, Brown headlined "The Slave Ship," by Mary Johnston. The Boni and Liveright ads stood out by virtue of a bold and ugly black border, but Liveright's sun was already in eclipse. The best he had to offer in 1924 was a novel by Lawrence Rising called "Proud Flesh" and "An Anthology of Pure Poetry" by a tired George Moore. He also trumpeted a first novel, "The Back of the Book," by a Margaret Leech, who was later to win literary fame with her "Reveille in Washington."

HARPER'S ANNOUNCED Nancy Boyd's "Distressing Dialogues," "with a preface by Edna Millay." They also gave considerable prominence to a book by Lee Hartman called "Standardized Mah-jong." The Modern Library added its 109th title: "Thais," by Anatole France. Ben Huebsch, then as now one of America's great publishers, featured Sherwood Anderson's "A Story Teller's Story," and Frances Newman's "The Short Story's Mutations." Another courageous publisher, Thomas Seltzer, offered Proust's "Within a Budding Grove," and "The Janitor's Boy," by Nathalia Crane (whatever became of *her?*). Several other houses whose names have become memories were powers in the publishing world of twenty years ago. Penn announced a first printing of 50,000 copies of Temple Bailey's "Peacock Feathers." Duffield was pumping for Horace Green's "Life of Calvin Coolidge." "Honest Cal" was elected President in November, despite Alice Longworth's assertion that he "always looked as though he had been weaned on a pickle." Edward J. Clode had a couple of new detective stories by Louis Tracy. A. & C. Boni were working on Jim Tully's "Beggars of Life." Brentano's had a best seller in Bernard Shaw's "Saint Joan."

THE DIAL PRESS (then owned by Lincoln MacVeagh) featured R. H. Mottram's "The Spanish Farm." Century had a mild shocker in Percy Marks's "The Plastic Age." Pascal Covici, in Chicago, was offering Ben Hecht's "The Kingdom of Evil" at the modest price of ten dollars a copy.

There were no book clubs in 1924. The Book-of-the-Month Club did not begin operations until 1926. Retail booksellers were disturbed, however, by the fact that Sears, Roebuck were offering Papini's "Life of Christ" at a special price.

Two pleasant Manhattan bookshops that advertised in early issues of *The Saturday Review of Literature* have gone out of existence: McDevitt-Wilson and The Sunwise Turn. Magazines of the period that have vanished from the scene include *Scribner's, The Bookman, Forum, The Dial,* and *World's Work.* Henry Wysham Lanier was just preparing to launch *The Golden Book,* which failed through sheer mismanagement. Dent Smith's *Encore* is proving that its formula was sound.

BENÉT'S FIRST Phoenix Nest column disclosed that he had seen Douglas Fairbanks in "The Thief of Bagdad" and the first performance of O'Neill's "All God's Chillun Got Wings" at the Provincetown Playhouse. "The lead," said Bill, "was played by Paul Robeson, who was impressive." The *New York Tribune* announced that Stuart Sherman was the new editor of its Sunday Book Review. A new firm, known as Selznick-Brentano Junior, Inc., was formed, with a capital of $20,000. The officers were Arthur Brentano, Jr., David O. Selznick, and Frank H. Shaw. "Interesting innovations of importance to the book publishing and motion picture fields," declared the press release, "will shortly be announced. Expansion of capitalization is intended in the Autumn." (Note: Selznick's "Gone With the Wind" will gross forty million dollars. His new picture, "Since You Went Away," cost almost four million before it was ready for public unveiling.)

THE DAY AFTER the first issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* appeared, Joseph Conrad died at Bourne, England. On September 15, 1924, the Prince of Wales visited the Doubleday, Page plant at Garden City. On October 4, Anatole France died at Tours. Ten days later, Laura Jean

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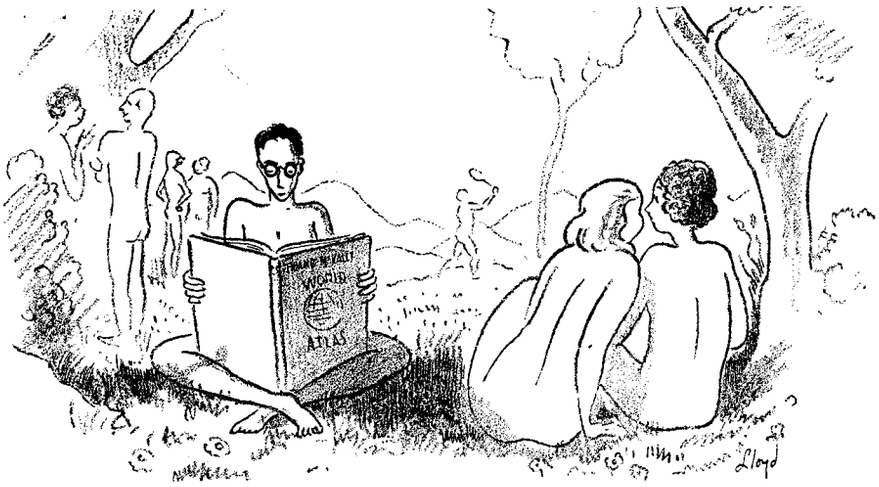


—*Reprinted from* SRL, *May 9, 1936.*

"He can't seem to get used to the place."

Libby died in Brooklyn. (Can you remember the titles of any of the books she wrote? A few of them are "Leonie Locke, or the Romance of a Beautiful New York Working Girl," "Miss Middleton's Lover, or Parted on Their Bridal Tour," and "Little Rosebud's Lovers, or A Cruel Revenge.") On October 20, the editors of the new French National Dictionary announced that they were omitting the words "defeatism" and "defeatist." "These words," cried Marshal Joffre, "do not apply in any manner to the people or things of France." Pétain, seated at Joffre's elbow, applauded vigorously.

ON OCTOBER 29, 1924, Frances Hodgson Burnett, author of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," passed away at Plandome, Long Island. In November, Dodd, Mead announced that its $13,500 prize novel contest, conducted with "Famous Players-Lasky," had been won by Martha Ostenso's "The Passionate Flight." Brentano's imported an edition of "Picturesque Germany." Horace Liveright announced that he was going to produce plays. Reilly & Lee offered something radically new: a book of comic cartoons. The title was "Andy Gump," by Sidney Smith. Justice John Ford tries to railroad a book censorship law through the New York Legislature, and Town Hall staged a debate on the subject. Ernest Boyd flayed censorship of any description; John S. Sumner defended it (he's still at it!). Dutton published Milne's "When We Were Very Young," Boni corralled a winner in Will Rogers's "Illiterate Digest," and Theodore Dreiser delivered the manuscript of "An American Tragedy." The star of the New York Booksellers' Dinner was Marie Dressler, who spoke about her autobiography, "The Life Story of An Ugly Duckling."

IN *PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY,* Thomas Masson advised collectors of first editions, "Buy 'em all when they come out. Hold 'em for thirty years. Then sell 'em for one fifth of what they cost you." Fanny Butcher wrote a piece about her bookshop in Chicago, and the book buyer at Macy's, Miss Grace Gaige, told about her new collection of "Recitations Old and New for Boys and Girls." Fred Melcher used an occasional joke as filler. Examples:

SHE: I showed father the verses you sent me. He was pleased with them.
HE: Indeed. What did he say?
SHE: He said he was delighted to find that I wasn't going to marry a poet.

AUNTY: Johnny, did you enjoy the book I sent you?
JOHNNY: I haven't looked at it yet.
AUNTY: Why? Don't you like it?
JOHNNY: I don't know. Ma said I'd have to wash my hands when I read it.

THE HOLIDAY season of 1924 was a prosperous one. The Coolidge bull market was just beginning to work up steam. Mama and papa did crossword puzzles while the kids sang "All Alone" and "California, Here I Come." Frank Morley sailed on the *S. S. Ondura* to take charge of the London office of the Century Company. Brentano's prepared to move to their new store at 47 Street and Fifth Avenue. Alex Trachtenberg opened the office of International Publishers and announced a book by a young man named Joseph Stalin. Houghton Mifflin were ready to usher in 1925 with Amy Lowell's "Life of Keats"; Harper's had a new Zane Grey, "The Thundering Herd," ready for January 3. The publishing business marched on. In a prison in the little city of Landsberg am Lech, Germany, another author was putting the finishing touches to a book destined to make something of a stir. When Adolf Hitler was freed from jail in January, 1925, he carried the first draft of "Mein Kampf" under his arm.

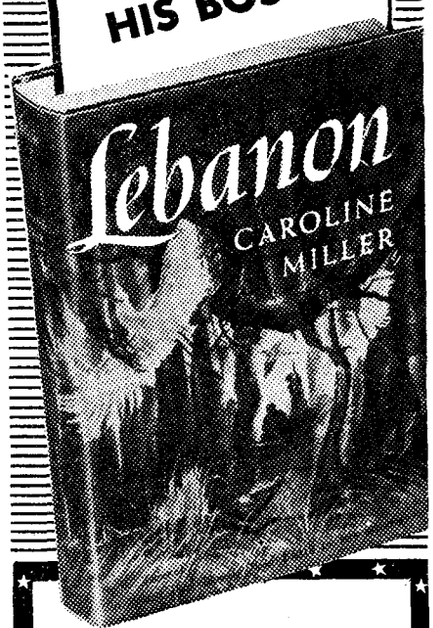
BENNETT CERF.

Praise for the new novel by

CAROLINE MILLER

author of the Pulitzer Prize Winner

LAMB IN HIS BOSOM



"Written with all of the exquisite cadence of the Pulitzer Prize winner, *Lamb in His Bosom* . . . LEBANON is a multiple story—of refinements and coarse lusts, of unexpected kindnesses, of fierce loyalties . . . With her rare gift for translating the subtle sights and sounds of nature, Miss Miller has conjured up a background of such wonder as Eve must have felt when her eyes opened on Eden."

—*N. Y. Herald Tribune.*

LEBANON

by Caroline Miller

At your bookseller's • $2.50

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

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he Saturday Review has chosen, as the theme of its Twentieth Anniversary Issue, literature between wars.

During this period there has been one great writer who has articulated each strand of the broad spectrum of American civilization. That writer is John Dos Passos.

1921 He began his career with THREE SOLDIERS, the first novel to set forth America's disgust with war.

1925 In MANHATTAN TRANSFER, in 1925, he put our greatest city under his microscope. Shuttling by ferry, subway and cab, he followed New Yorkers, in the little circle of their daily lives. And with these simple materials built a classic New York.

1930 THE 42ND PARALLEL mirrored the coming of age of big business in America.

1932 With his "camera eye" he recorded the years of the big boom in NINETEEN NINETEEN.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

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1933 In BIG MONEY we saw the bubble snap and a new agony of depression begin.

1938 In THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG MAN post-war blended into pre-war. Dos Passos was concerned with the perplexities that the Spanish Civil War presented to a young American.

1943 NUMBER ONE presented, not the danger of Fascism abroad, but the danger still latent of Fascism at home.

1944 Today, in an election year, in an invasion year, America leans over its lathe muttering. Travelling around the nation John Dos Passos has set down what he heard. Its title is STATE OF THE NATION. "A good book, indeed a very good book . . . it is doubtful that he has ever been more im—portant."—*Gerald Johnson, N.Y. Herald Tribune.*

No period in our history has been so full of extremes. One by one Dos Passos' novels have picked up the great moments of this period and set each one in its place. He has had the courage to believe and also the courage to doubt. Out of time itself he has made a portrait that we may not forget.

COMPANY PUBLISHERS

Books by John Dos Passos

ONE MAN'S INITIATION
THREE SOLDIERS
ROSINANTE TO THE ROAD AGAIN
A PUSHCART AT THE CURB
STREETS OF NIGHT
MANHATTAN TRANSFER
THE GARBAGE MAN
ORIENT EXPRESS
AIRWAYS, INC.
THE 42ND PARALLEL
NINETEEN NINETEEN
IN ALL COUNTRIES
THREE PLAYS in one volume: THE GARBAGE MAN, AIRWAYS, INC., FORTUNE HEIGHTS
THE BIG MONEY
U. S. A. in one volume: THE 42ND PARALLEL, NINETEEN NINETEEN, THE BIG MONEY
JOURNEYS BETWEEN WARS
ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG MAN
THE GROUND WE STAND ON
NUMBER ONE
STATE OF THE NATION

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The Bowling Green

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

—*Eric Schaal*
Christopher Morley

EDITOR'S NOTE: *For many years, Christopher Morley's The Bowling Green was standard fare in* The Saturday Review. *Under the pseudonym, P. E. G. Quercus, he also wrote the column, Trade Winds, now the particular province of Bennett Cerf. Mr. Morley herewith contributes a Bowling Green column in the old manner.*

THE village was doubtful about our red flag. As long as we just hung it on one of the beanpoles it wasn't so bad; but this year we put up a staff with halliards. Village officers felt easier when we flew the Stars and Stripes above the other. The only real embarrassment our little commune ever had was when a foreign commercial attaché heard about our experiment in collectivist farming. It was suggested that perhaps the consul would even be pleased to give us a real Soviet flag. We might conceivably get a citation from Big Joe himself. This worried some of the members. In an Old Guard village like ours. . . .

Our red flag is an old mothbitten signal bunting, the B of the maritime code. If you need to know, it was once the third letter of a hoist used as advertisement at a theatre in Hoboken, where it was the final initial in the signal S.O.B.—That didn't mean what you suppose; it meant *Star of Bengal*, a play of which the less said the happier. After the opening (and closing) week the producers decided that the letters stood for their favorite Hoboken slogan, *Seacoast of Bohemia*. Nobody stood for the play.

The white initials now sewed on the flag were scissored (by me) from an old undershirt. Even if you can spare an undershirt, that's not an easy job when three of the letters are curly. When the red cloth blows free in our Long Island sirocco, you can read them: R S V P—Roslyn Soviet of Vegetable Producers. An equally good acrostic would have been Churchill's B S T T; for this is our acre of aceldama, our modest community garden where eight suburban families struggle in amateur socialized production. Each member is responsible for certain crops; and on Saturday mornings and Tuesday afternoons you might see one conscript of the glebe creeping on knees and elbows, weeding beets. At this moment there are 800 feet of them that need it. (Our total of beet plantings is about 2200 feet. That's a lot of hands and knees.)

I'd have been grieved if I had known beforehand that the most useful job a world war could find for me would be growing beets. But always self-persuasive, I find the chore has its honest pleasures; even the all-fours posture, which amuses more gracile colleagues, is good for humility and drip. Best are those afternoons when no one else is in the field. The wide sky above is ardent blue and silver (we've had no decent rain for almost a month), the air is julep sweet, and in the herb section (savory, dill, basil, borage) the bees are pushing for place like commuters at a row of phone booths. Neighborhood sounds that would infuriate one at a writing desk are here only a pleasant undertone in the universal diapason. Dogs bark, chickens crow and gargle, small boys in the adjoining orchard are machine-gunning a beachhead, an Atlantic clipper or a two-tailed Liberator cruises over. From a house near-by comes the palaver of all-day radio. You tie a fresh handkerchief round your brow as absorbent and look hazily to see where you laid down your wet spectacles; or how far ahead along the row did you place pipe and tobacco as lure. Across the parallels of chard or broccoli come tidings of the enormous world. You straighten your acute angles and grunt vertical to listen. It may be Superman or Lone Ranger (bet *they* never sweated like this), or maybe someone's attempt to assassinate Hitler. He was "only singed," you hear; and grunt again as you resume weed-pulling. In such baked earth not even the trick of twisting will drag out those rubbery stems—is it purslane? Wonderful how in early growth it looks almost exactly like the infant beet. You nearly find yourself thinking analogies; but not quite. In glowing utility and sweat you are at ease, rid of the infernal obbligato of thought. Small things delight. Just to discover and rescue one baby plant overgrown by upas weeds is achievement; more than Hitler accomplished. To tear up one of your own seedlings by accident makes you bay with anguish. But mostly you crawl in peaceful stew and stupor. Some tag or tune that comes chancey to mind will keep you happy for an hour. You repeat it a hundred times over. "What stained glass window could repeat The red-veined leafage of the beet?"—"Our vegetable love shall grow Vaster than empires and more slow." Tenderly you succor a stripling from lush vandal stalks; gaze with parent's eye upon its threadlike vein of crimson juice. "If you're ever in a jam, Here I am." That sets you on a new tune for the next fifty yards.

There is comedy too; you're glad no one is there to see. Too lazy to travel all the way to the faucet to turn off the water, you try to skip in between the twirling sprays of our big sprinkler, Lady Precious Stream. She has two nozzles, rotating slowly, but faster than you think. It's possible, leaping across the rows of plants, to bisect the angle, skirmish in between the two jets, firmly grab the arm, and hold it sideways while you lift the heavy standard and stumble muddily elsewhere. But watching to prevent the hose from crushing your colleague's carrots one spout wriggles free. You get it straight in the face; or worse, on the breast pocket where is your pack of cigarettes. After cannily moving the thing to another parched area you try to rush away. Just then the neighbor (whose water we rent) turns off a flowing faucet. The pressure speeds up, you receive an icy douche on the back of the neck.

Saturdays, when a whole dozen or more commissars are at work together, are more sociably humorous. The promiscuity of garb is a joy to the eye. The ladies particularly, in their wide straw hats and varying lengths of pantaloon or rondure of halter, seem to me to have a Korean look. Some are accompanied by small children who trot with docility but endless question up and down between the rows. Gigantic Simon Legree, chief commissar, stripped to the waist and bawling unexpected madrigals, strides furiously across and across with his hand plow. Not for him the bent crawl of the helot. He has blueprints and graphs of every crop, and regards a

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failure of rainfall as wanton breakdown of celestial efficiency. I enjoy speculating what these colleagues may be thinking as they apply themselves to their picturesque tasks. They include an architect, a newspaper man, a professor, a publisher, a stockbroker, an industrial engineer. In a group so diverse anything might be thought. One of my own anesthetic notions is a kind of Montague James spook story. In an innocent group of suburban gardeners someone, while planting, must have been secretly full of sombre and carnal yen. For later, to everyone's horror, among the cool cucumbers or the prim Swiss chard, something dreadful came pushing up —something so ghastly, so appalling, so gross and unseemly and outrageous, that its exact nature could never possibly be divulged, only shudderingly hinted. On a night of pure midsummer moon a committee of the older men had to go privily and dig it out, exorcise and destroy it—but it shrieked as it was torn from the soil —and one of the members was found dead in bed the next morning—in the wrong bed—I shall never write the story. I learned long ago how much more fun it is just to imagine things; not write them out for print.

* * * *

I gave up amusing myself in public when I discovered that no matter what one wrote people always called it Essays. But if I were still doing weekly pieces, beets would provide a good formula for the familiar essay. For instance, they won't grow in an acid soil; and they're 87% water. According to the excellent *Pocket Book of Vegetable Gardening* (my reference library in agriculture) their carbohydrate content, I suppose that means starch and sugar, is moderate, only 9.6%. They are 1.6% protein, which isn't bad either for a vegetable or an essay; 1/10 of 1 percent fat, and only 9/10,000 of 1 percent iron. (Every essayist needs to be careful of irony. Look what happened to Colby and Firkins). They (I mean beets) are plus on riboflavin, and I don't need to tell you how good the tops are as boiled greens. Beets transplant well, just like essays: I've seen an essay transplanted into dozens of textbooks, where the consumer had no notion what volume it came from originally. And, like a lot of good stuff, they started around the Mediterranean about 2000 years ago.

When I first sent pieces to *The Saturday Review*, twenty years ago, I was writing from Normandy; as a matter of fact I was the first American, until lately, who ever spent as long as two weeks in the town of Cherbourg. I was telling you then all about the things that have become so tragically News this summer; for instance the hedges of the Cotentin, and the weather. Don't believe the papers when they keep telling you that June, 1944 in Normandy was exceptional. Summer in Normandy was always like that. Ernie Pyle was pleased to find in Barneville the one person (a schoolteacher) who could talk English. I think it was I who taught it to her. I wish I could write you something here that would be as incredibly apropos twenty years hence as those Bowling Greens of 1924 are now. If anyone in 1964 should turn back to the files what could he find that might have meaning? Will there still be a *Saturday Review of Literature?* A Book of the Month? *Pocket Books?* An International Police? Anyway, there'll still be beets.

In the felicity of not writing by duress any more, a grown man puts some of his private meditation into verse; a good deal of which he has no intention of publishing. I think sometimes of that graceful little poem by Cowper about the time when he went to his desk at Olney to do a stint of writing and found his inkwell had been dried up by the sun. He consoled his annoyance by thinking that the unused ink, drawn into atmosphere, might atomize with other moistures to be part of a rainbow. It can do no harm to think the same about our own secret stuff. It may become, somehow, part of the climate. Anyone who wrote to strict schedule, whether daily or weekly, for twenty-one years, has learned a healthy aversion from anything that must be done on time. With what joy, then, he mumbles runes of his own for himself, caring little whether anyone hears or not. I'll tell you one of them:—

What did you do in man's worst winter?
Navigate ships through gale and fog?
I read proof for a bloody printer,
And exercised the dog.

What, then, in the amazing summer?
Did you storm a beach? or write like Keats?
Did you fly the ocean in a bomber?
I was weeding beets.

A Sea Shell in Normandy

Reprinted from Mr. Morley's The Bowling Green in the first issue of The Saturday Review of Literature, *August 2, 1924.*

YOU first see Mount Saint Michel from the toy railway train at St. Jean-le-Thomas. You know then that what you have always heard was true. After lunch at Genêts you drive across the sands at low tide, in a cart pulled by two horses. On a gray afternoon, with opal stormclouds coiling in the West, the wide floor of the bay lies wet and bare, shining all silver and fishbelly colors. The rock of Tombelaine sprawls like a drowsy mastiff on guard. You feel that if you stroked the warm granite chine he would rise, stretching, and fill the empty day with a yawn of thunder. In all that clean vacancy, framed in the blue scabbard of Normandy and Brittany, the holy boulder rises, a pinnacle of stone jewelry. The great ramps are rusted with tawny lichen. Tiny gardens niched among the steep zigzags are bright with flowers. With the genuine thrill and tingle of the pilgrim you climb, cricking your neck at the noble sheer of those walls and struts that lean upward and inward to carry the needle of the spire. Pinnacles rally and burn aloft like darts of flame. You can almost feel the whole roundness of earth poise and spin, socketed upon this stony boss of peace. You think of the Woolworth Building. How nice if that too were sown with clumps of pink and yellow blossoms, and had blankets of green ivy over its giraffe rump.

Your mind travels back to the tough and pious men who carried their stones here and built their little Eden of escape: an Eden so shrewdly scarped that apparently even the fifteenth century Old Bills of England cursed and withdrew. You imagined pilgrims of the middle ages plodding the sands from Avranches—occasionally losing one or two of the party in a quicksand—and their heavenly exult as they ached at last up the steps of the "Grand Degree" and saw through the dark archway that wide hearth shouting with flame. Yet perhaps mere pilgrims were not allowed to draw near the giant fireplaces of

(*Please turn to page* 60)

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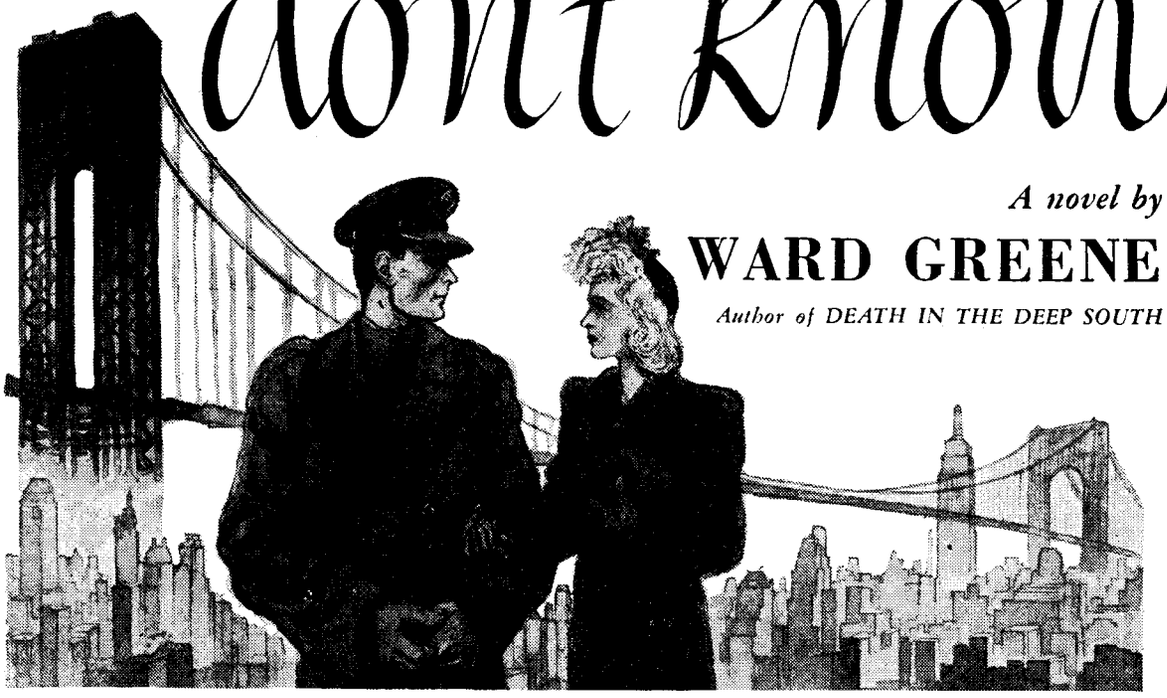

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(*Continued from page* 57)

Saint Michel? That ruddy warmth that gilded the groins of the pillars, was it reserved for the abbot and the upper clergy? (You saw, I hope, those great columns in the crypt, where the veins of stone rise to their task as smoothly, as alive with lifting strength, as the cords of a horse's haunch).—One wonders a good deal about the mediæval pilgrim. Was he welcomed and warmed and refreshed or was he pillaged? Probably the souvenir vendors lay alert for him, as they do today. And was there a mediæval Veuve Poulard, down by the barbican, with an omelet waiting hot in the pan, a bottle of wine cold in the cellar? At any rate many a whole ox must have crackled in those vast hooded chimneys of the abbey; and the warrior abbot could throw his bones out of the window on the *goddams,* hustling to get their bombards back to Tombelaine before they were caught by the tide.

* * *

So you people this divine old miracle of stonework, just as you have dreamed beforehand of a still living shrine with candles by the altar, and small shrill choirboys in scarlet, the flutter of surplice and soutane, and dark bells calling across the sandy estuary. Then, as you are taken through in squads by a *gardien,* you realize that this noble sanctuary is dead. It is no longer a church, but a monument, under the care of the Ministry of Fine Arts. The abbey is only a shell: there is not even a chance to pray. The State, with skilful devotion, has saved and repaired the hull; but it is only a hull. There if anywhere, lifted above the quicksands (how often the old abbots must have improved this moral in their discourses) one would be eager to whisper some small silly petition in honor of man's magnificent hopes. But it is not expected. The old fonts are dry, the altars naked, the tall aisles bare as a February forest. The casket of stone filigree is empty. The imprint of the spirit is there, just as those leagues of sand are ripple-patterned by this morning's ebb. But it is only a print, a fossil. The sea has gone out. Even the tiniest parish church, with its Tariff of Marriages: (a First Class Marriage 50 francs, a Second Class Marriage 30 francs, a Third Class 20 francs) is in some sense more inwardly alive. The Mount is not even an island any more; they've built a *digue* that brings autobuses and toy trains from Pontorson. It is a shrine, a miracle, a testimonial of man's horror of the world and his fellows; but its beauty is the beauty of death, purified, serene, at rest.

You drive away across the luminous mirrors of wet beach, you see that exquisite profile shift and alter until it is a scissored peak on sky. You may walk the ebb-sands of the world forever and not find so lovely a shell. But it is only a shell, and in its whorls and passages a faintest echo of the sea.

Must it always be so, one thinks, lighting up the pipe of penitential Scaferlati? Perhaps there is always something a little dead (I don't defend this figure of speech, but I like it) about the old masterpieces? Glorious and terrible, don't they say to us that we are not to be dismayed by their beauty but to recreate our own masterpieces for ourselves? The other day I read Alfred De Musset's gorgeous little fable, "Histoire d'un Merle Blanc": one of those fiery trifles in which the French genius seems at its most native: under the guise of tender and *naïf* simplicity such a clear ember of satire. My first thought was that De Musset's adorable little dagger in the heart should have made (if it had been heeded) so many later books unnecessary. So far as it bears on literary manners it clicks the latch today as neatly as it did seventy or eighty years ago, and might have spared us many editorials in the newspapers. I laid it down with the despairing happiness that any student feels on reaching the end of a perfect thing; for I could imagine how happy was the Infant of His Century when he finished it. He had reached one of those rare and perfect moments the artist lives for. He had done it, and knew it was good.

Yet it all had to be done again—and has been. And I remembered, Mont Saint Michel reinforcing it, that these things must always be done over and over; that there is no durable pause even in the most perfect pinnacles that overlook the sea. Here and there a pilgrim will be bogged in a quicksand, or get caught by the tide. But some will reach, for one night's reverence, the shrine where the dragon of despair grinds under Michael's heel. They chant their private prayers and penances, they get out the illuminated manuscripts, they sing their sacreds, they make their mirth. They roast an ox in the fireplace, and throw the bones through the window where the critics are hailing their heavy bombards through the sand.

Chateau de Missery

By Christopher Morley

(*Reprinted from* The Saturday Review, *August 7, 1926*)

"HERE is a place where poems might be made."
But in the linden arch such matins twittered,
Fish swam such curves beneath the balustrade,
The poet paused and found himself embittered.
Stubble was savory by the grasscut edge,
The sun decanted Meursault-colored shine,
And shamed by random mosses on the ledge
He corked the inkpot and uncorked the wine.

Here every shape outrhymes the poet's wit:
In every view such harmonies are spoken
New-joinered verses will not do, he fears.
Bring out some strong old sonnet, polished fit,
Plain as these grainy panels, dark and oaken,
Rubbed and sweetened by Burgundian years.

Invocation to an Audience

(*Reprinted from* The Saturday Review, *March 5, 1927*)

NOW for the moment are your minds removed
From everything but loveliness,
And you here present, if you've ever loved,
Loved and then wearied of that sweet distress,
You who have dearly proved
The arrow's sharpness and the archer's blindness
Remember still, as best behooved,
His loving kindness.

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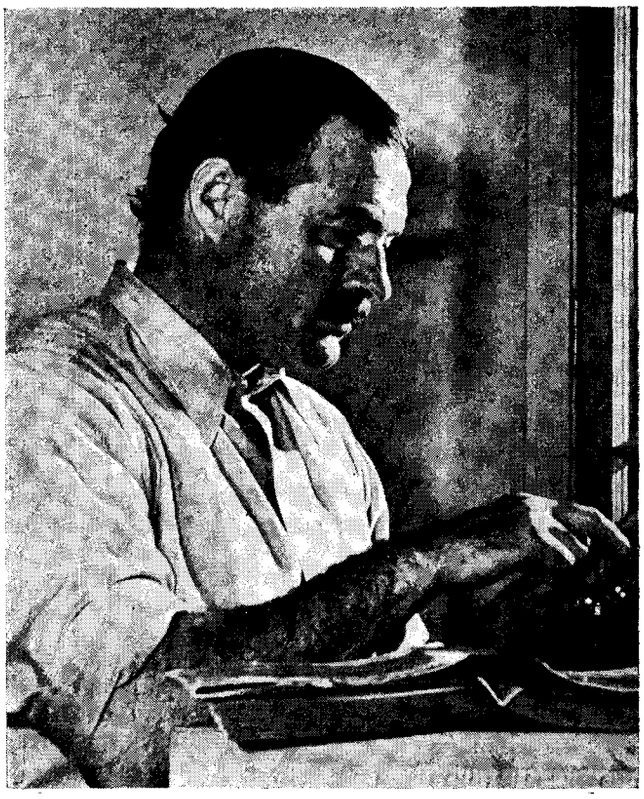
SRL Poll on Novels and Novelists



ERNEST HEMINGWAY was born in Oak Park, Illinois, forty-six years ago. He was the son of a country doctor. At fifteen he ran away from home, but returned and graduated from high school in 1917. For a short time he was a reporter on the *Kansas City Star* but left for Italy to become an ambulance driver and later an infantryman in the Italian army in the First World War. He was wounded and came back home when the war ended. Three years later he was living in Paris, after a brief interlude as a correspondent in the Near East. The American colony in Paris gave him the material for his satirical "The Sun Also Rises," as five years later he used Italy and the World War for the background of "A Farewell to Arms." In 1936, he saw the bloody Spanish Civil War and recognized its significance as a prelude and rehearsal of what was to come. "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and a play, "The Fifth Column," were the matured results of his Spanish experiences. His absorption in Spain's national sport, bull-fighting, led to "Death in the Afternoon" and a later hunting trip to Africa produced "The Green Hills of Africa." A previous novel was full of the rum-running and banditry he found near his home in Florida—"To Have and Have Not."

Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms" is widely considered the finest American war novel though "For Whom the Bell Tolls" may rank as his greatest work to date. All of his fiction, including his many short-stories—and he is truly a master of the short-story—is marked with his own love for action and danger. He is a hunter and a fisherman in whom critics have observed a cult of blood and death. His style and his terse manner of writing pointed dialogue have been imitated by almost a generation of young writers. His great gift as a novelist is an ability to absorb and translate the moods and the passions of the people amongst whom he has been living. At a time of cynicism and depression he was our prophet of war and of the violence that was to come.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW has asked a number of its contributors to nominate the leading American novelist and the leading novel of the last twenty years. Ernest Hemingway wins hands down as the leading novelist, receiving twice as many votes as Willa Cather, the runner-up, with John Dos Passos third on the list. Sinclair Lewis was fourth, Thomas Wolfe fifth, Ellen Glasgow sixth, and Theodore Dreiser seventh. John Steinbeck, Kenneth Roberts, William Faulkner, and Marjorie Rawlings were tied for eighth place.

Judging from the balloting, it is apparent that the critics have taken into account the sum total of a writer's work, for the leading novelist and the leading novel do not coincide. Sinclair Lewis's "Arrowsmith" was chosen the outstanding novel, with Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms" a close second. Dos Passos's "U.S.A." was third; Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" fourth; "For Whom the Bell Tolls" fifth. "Arrowsmith" picked up a large number of ballots through the "split-ticket" system of voting, while the voters for Mr. Hemingway, for the most part, selected the works of other writers for their choice of best novel. However, all the voters for Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe, and Dreiser nominated books by those authors as well. All of the Dos Passos votes were for "U.S.A." The nominations for Wolfe's books were divided between "Of Time and the River" and "Look Homeward Angel." Several critics who voted for Hemingway as the outstanding novelist listed Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" as the best novel, while other Hemingway ballots went to "Arrowsmith," "Look Homeward Angel," and "An American Tragedy." Mr. Hemingway, apparently, has caused some confusion in the minds of those who thought him the greatest novelist over two decades. Less than half his followers gave him credit for writing the best novel, and they were divided between "A Farewell to Arms" and "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

It might appear, on the basis of this poll, that the literary period covered by *The Saturday Review's* history has been somewhat chaotic. Actually, it reflects an important distinction between a single great book and the cumulative work of a writer. Also affecting the results of the poll was the fact that it was limited to a specific period—1924 to 1944. Much of Dreiser's best writing, for example, with the exception of his "An American Tragedy" (1925), was published years before 1924; Sinclair Lewis's "Main Street" appeared in 1920 and "Babbitt" in 1922, so that those particular titles, both of them famous books, did not figure in the survey. All of Mr. Hemingway's work, on the other hand, with the exception of "In Our Time," "The Sun Also Rises," and a collection of short stories and verse, came out after 1924. The editors of *The Saturday Review* did not contribute to the poll, but in the estimation of at least one of them, the votes for the first four of the outstanding novelists might have read, Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, John Steinbeck, and Ellen Glasgow. The novels might have been, "Arrowsmith," "For Whom the Bell Tolls," "The Grapes of Wrath," and "Barren Ground."

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The Compleat Collector and the Typographic Scene

CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS

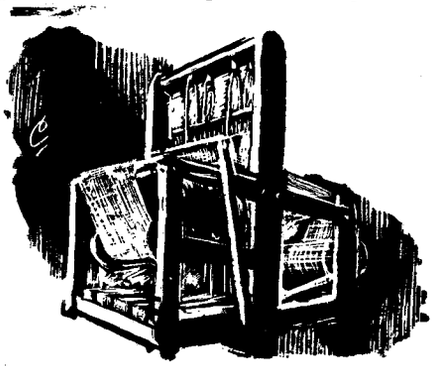
IT was nearly seventeen years ago, in the issue of October 29, 1927, that The Compleat Collector first appeared in the pages of *The Saturday Review of Literature,* contributed by the present writer and George Parker Winship. Its purpose, as announced in the department heading, was to treat of "Rare Books, First Editions, Fine Typography." Not long after, Mr. Winship was succeeded by Gilbert M. Troxwell, and when he resigned Mr. (now Colonel) John T. Winterich became collaborator. For a number of years I have been alone responsible for the column. The department at first appeared weekly, then bi-weekly, and now intermittently, but as an accepted feature of the magazine. The exigencies of war have greatly reduced the output of fine books and in other ways dried up the sources on which the department has been nourished.

My relations with the editors of *The Saturday Review of Literature* have been of the most friendly and cordial nature, and I am peculiarly pleased that they have never blue-pencilled a single sentence of mine, though what mental reservations they may have had I can only surmise. On one occasion the editor was almost threatened with mayhem because he had allowed me to reflect on the noble profession of advertising! Occasionally one hears the insinuation that reviewers for the literary journals are under pressure from the business office or the advertisers: I do not believe that this is true. Certainly in my own experience no attempt ever has been made, covertly or openly, in any way to influence what I have chosen to say in this department.

In my contributions to The Compleat Collector I have tried to keep abreast of the issues, chiefly in this country, of the more important typographic achievements in publishing, while out of the corner of my eye I have observed the odd items often overlooked in the more staid and serious pages of the magazine. No apology is necessary or offered for this concern with the by-ways of publishing. The compleat collector gathers on his shelves the books which are of interest to him, and nothing is more dreary than a room full of the "classics" of literature. To attempt to live with such books alone is to lack a sense of proportion, like dining exclusively on truffles and champagne. In our life an occasional meal of tripe is good for a change—but it must be good tripe, with a piquant sauce. In selecting books for notice I have endeavored to serve both truffles and tripe, but in the latter case I have looked for a typographic garnish which would make the book pleasing to the eye as well as palatable to the literary taste.

It is curious how few books do satisfy both the eye and the intellect. This is as true of old books as of new, except that the former sometimes acquire a sentimental, nostalgic value which beclouds judgment. New books, because they sometimes successfully reflect the mood of the moment, intrigue us beyond their deserts. We have seen finely printed books of the past sold for ridiculously small sums (Henry Stevens of Vermont bought a Gutenberg Bible for James Lenox for a few thousand dollars, and the latter was outraged at the expense!), and we have seen the work of certain printers of our own day soar to fantastic sums in the market place. It is impossible for the shrewdest critic properly to evaluate the current offerings of the press, because of very natural preferences and prejudices.

The selections of the Fifty Books of the Year by the juries of the American Institute of Graphic Arts are worth studying in this respect. I have just reëxamined the catalogue for the past twenty-two years. They include eleven hundred books chosen by over sixty different men and women, amateurs and professionals, from the many thousands of books published in this country. The selections are made from volumes printed for sale, which somewhat restricts the choices, eliminating some fine books printed for private distribution. Nevertheless the result is a fair sampling of American printing of books in the past twenty-two years. The results of such an examination are none too encouraging.



No two of the juries seem to have been guided by the same emotions in the search for excellence. One man's poison is Bodoni, while another's meat is Baskerville; one jury likes the subdued style of a Whittingham, while another has capitulated to the "modernism" of the magazine advertisement. But after all is said, the most obvious deduction is that there has been not so much progress or improvement as change—and the more book design has changed the more it is the same thing.

IN the past two decades we have had few high spots in book printing. We have seen Mr. Rogers's art mature, we have had the intrusion of advertising typography into the book field, we have welcomed the fresh and inspiring work of the Offenbach group, we have added immeasurably to our repertory of good book types, and we have viewed with dismay the corrupting influence of French decadence. To avoid misunderstanding, let me particularize.

Mr. Rogers is our greatest book designer. In the old days at Riverside he experimented in all the styles, and almost always with a sure touch. But in such books as his "Odyssey," "Aesop," "Shakespeare," and the Bible, he has reached a matured perfection which no one has approached.

The influence of advertising typography has brought some good—the loosening of the type page, and the introduction of the element of gayety—but since the "art" of advertising is to exploit the dubious "art" of propaganda, design has been based on the idea of mental coercion. Enlightenment and entertainment are good only as they promote sales.

Out of Germany after the last war came the work of Rudolph Koch and his associates at Offenbach, as lovely a combination of good type faces, exquisite wood engravings, and sensible design as any age has produced. They did, indeed, precipitate the modern rage for "sans-serif" types, but they themselves used them discreetly and appropriately.

The French post-war contribution, on the other hand, was less admirable. For many years French printers had chosen to ignore the compatibility of type and illustration, they now proceeded to extremes, and "having raked the ash-heap of failure" they introduced the discarded types of the nineteenth century. Their notable *Arts et Métiers Graphiques* was a veritable

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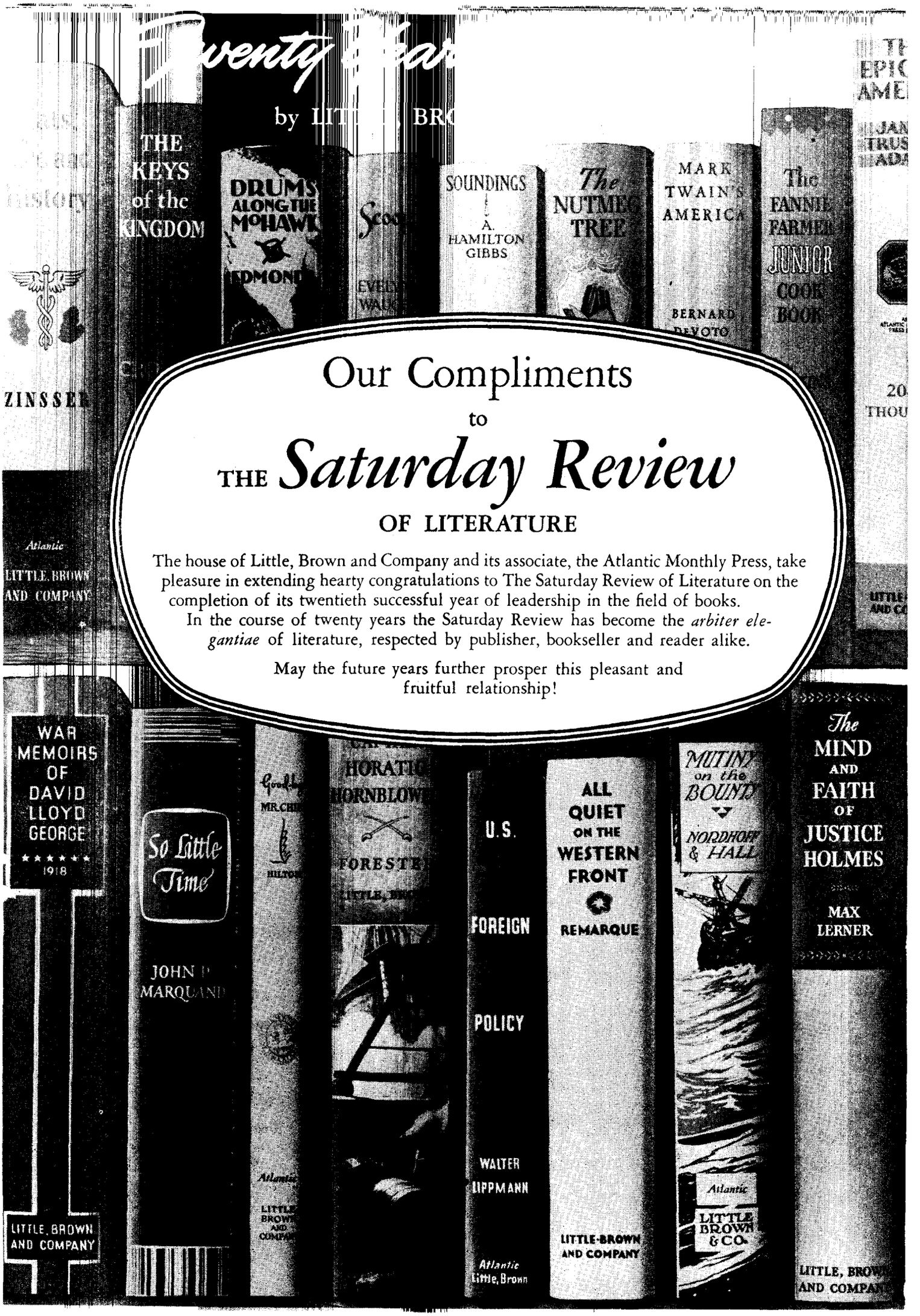
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by LITTLE BROWN
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DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK
SOUNDINGS
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In the course of twenty years the Saturday Review has become the arbiter elegantiae of literature, respected by publisher, bookseller and reader alike.
May the future years further prosper this pleasant and fruitful relationship!
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Twenty Years 1924

1924 The first issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature* was dated August 2—just about ten years after the outbreak of the First World War. Its editor was Henry Seidel Canby. Things looked rosy, with Calvin Coolidge in the White House and Andrew Mellon Secretary of the Treasury. That year Little, Brown & Company's best sellers in fiction were by E. Phillips Oppenheim, Mary Johnston and Mary E. Waller.

1925 Coolidge had become President by election the previous November. On February 19 the association between the Atlantic Monthly Press and Little, Brown & Company began. Among the new books were ***Soundings*** by A. Hamilton Gibbs, novels by A. S. M. Hutchinson and Jeffery Farnol, ***The Adventures of an Illustrator*** by Joseph Pennell and A. Edward Newton's ****The Greatest Book in the World.***

1926 The Atlantic Monthly Press list included Sylvia Thompson's first novel, ****The Hounds of Spring.*** Little, Brown & Company published ***Fifty Years of British Parliament*** by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith, a new edition in two volumes of Charles Warren's ***The Supreme Court in United States History,*** and a pocket edition of ***Emily Dickinson's Poems.*** On September 8 Germany was admitted to the League of Nations.

1927 Lindbergh flew the Atlantic Ocean alone. Emil Ludwig's ***Bismarck*** was a best seller and Mazo de la Roche with her novel ****Jalna*** won the first Atlantic Monthly Prize Novel Contest. Ripley's ****Main Street and Wall Street*** might have told some people that trouble was brewing in the stock market. ***The Trade Wind*** by Cornelia Meigs won the Beacon Hill Bookshelf Prize Contest.

1928 While the stock market went up Americans were still worrying about U.S.S.R. Business was booming and almost any book in lighter vein had a good sale. A book called ***The Pacific: A Forecast*** sold only a few hundred copies.

1929 Erich Maria Remarque's big best seller, ***All Quiet on the Western Front,*** was published June 1. The Kellogg-Briand Anti-War Treaty went into effect July 24. In the autumn the crash in the stock market. Among the new books that year were a first novel by Walter Edmonds called ****Rome Haul*** and a book by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, ****Falcons of France.***

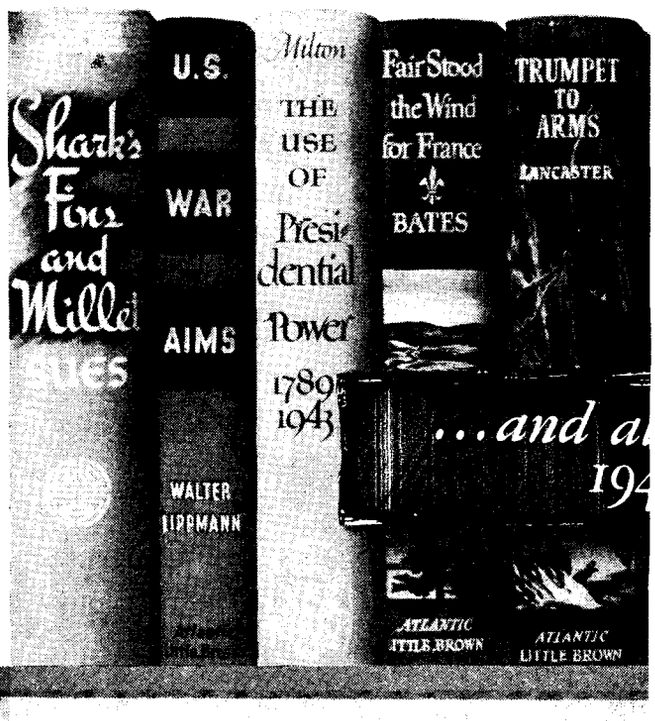
1930 A general slump in business—just a stock market crash, not a world depression. Among books still remembered, two from the Atlantic: ****The Adams Family*** by James Truslow Adams and ****Daniel Webster*** by Claude M. Fuess. Ludwig's ***Lincoln*** was very popular.

1931 Spanish Republic was proclaimed. In May ***Hatter's Castle,*** Dr. A. J. Cronin's first novel, which made him famous. Also: Remarque's ***The Road Back,*** ****The Epic of America*** by James Truslow Adams.

1932 Bread lines. Hoarding of money. Roosevelt elected President. Ann Bridge won the Atlantic Monthly Prize Novel Contest with ****Peking Picnic;*** Nordhoff and Hall's ****Mutiny on the Bounty*** was a Book-of-the-Month Club choice; Bernard DeVoto's ***Mark Twain's America*** was published.

1933 Roosevelt inaugurated March 4. Banks closed. Business at lowest ebb. Beginning of the New Deal. Nora Waln's book about China, ****The House of Exile,*** was published; also a novel by a man then unknown in this country—***The Gun*** by C. S. Forester.

1944 marks the one hundred and eighth year of book publication under the imprint of Little, Brown and Company. It marks, too, the twentieth year of association of Little, Brown and Company with The Atlantic Monthly Press. And, not least, it completes twenty years of mutual support



Non Refert Quam Multo

This quotation from the Latin, meaning roughly "Not how many, but how good," or, in publishers' lingo, "Fewer and Better Books," appeared in the colophon which Little, Brown & Company used from 1917 until its centenary year, 1937. But it wasn't until the great depression following 1929 that we really began seriously to back up words with deeds. In 1929 this Company issued 89 new books; in 1930, 93; in 1931, 66. Skip ten years, and in 1941 the count still was 66.

Then came Pearl Harbor, and the thought

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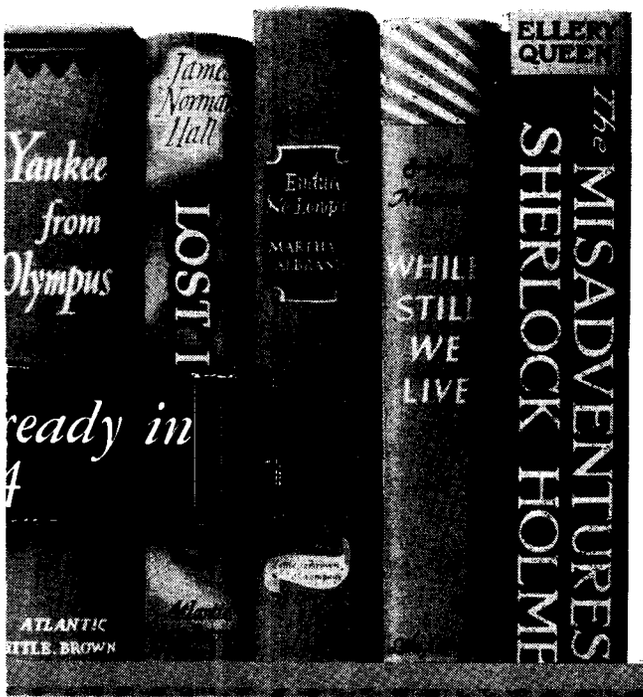
# of Publishing 1944

and encouragement between the publishers and the *Saturday Review of Literature.* This is, therefore, a fitting time to review the high lights which have been contributed to the world of books during the last twenty years by Little, Brown and Company and the Atlantic Monthly Press.



Sed Quam Bonos Habeas

that if paper had been rationed in England, it would be rationed here too, and there would be difficulties about cloth, about personnel, about shipping. Book publishers' lists are planned months ahead; drastic measures couldn't be effective overnight; the count in 1942 was still 66; in 1943, 51. But at this writing, July 1, 1944, Little, Brown & Company's new books of 1944 will total 49. All these figures have to do with trade books, include the new books of the Atlantic Monthly Press, omit revised editions and reissues. *Forty-nine new books!*

1934 Overnight James Hilton became famous with the publication of his short novel, ****Good-bye, Mr. Chips.*** Sequels to ****Mutiny on the Bounty*** by Nordhoff and Hall, ****Men Against the Sea*** and ****Pitcairn's Island,*** were both issued. Big best sellers in fiction were scarce. The *Saturday Review* was ten years old.

1935 Hitler ordered conscription in Germany. ****Old Jules*** by Mari Sandoz won the Atlantic Non-Fiction Contest, Hans Zinsser's ****Rats, Lice and History*** was published, Cronin's ***The Stars Look Down,*** and Burton Hendrick's ****The Lees of Virginia.***

1936 Bernard DeVoto became editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature.* The Rome-Berlin Axis was formed. New books included ****Drums Along the Mohawk*** by Walter Edmonds, Nordhoff and Hall's ****The Hurricane*** and a novel by C. S. Forester, ***The General,*** which didn't have the reading it deserved.

1937 Spanish Civil War. Little, Brown & Company celebrated its Centenary and the *Saturday Review of Literature* issued a special supplement March 27 in commemoration of the occasion. John P. Marquand's ***The Late George Apley*** was published in January, Margery Sharp's ***The Nutmeg Tree*** in the summer, A. J. Cronin's ***The Citadel*** in September and the Eleventh Edition of ***Bartlett's Familiar Quotations,*** edited by Christopher Morley and Louella D. Everett.

1938 George Stevens succeeded Bernard DeVoto as editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature.* The Sixth Avenue "El" in New York City torn down (according to some, this metal was later dumped on Americans). Austrian Anschluss. Ogden Nash's most popular book of verse, ***I'm a Stranger Here Myself,*** was published; also ***Mr. Popper's Penguins*** by Richard and Florence Atwater, Phyllis Bottome's novel about "inside" Germany, ***The Mortal Storm,*** and *Scoop* by Evelyn Waugh.

1939 World's Fair in New York. Second World War. New publications included *Escape* by Ethel Vance, another "inside" Germany novel; ***The Heritage of America,*** by Commager and Nevins, C. S. Forester's trilogy in one volume, ***Captain Horatio Hornblower,*** Nora Waln's ****Reaching for the Stars,*** Agnes Newton Keith's ****Land Below the Wind*** and ***Ben and Me,*** the first book written and illustrated by Robert Lawson.

1940 Dunkirk. The fall of France. Conscription in the United States. Norman Cousins became the editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature.* ****The Family*** by Nina Fedorova won the Atlantic Prize Novel Contest.

1941 Roosevelt began his third term in January. New books include ****Random Harvest*** by James Hilton, ***The Keys of the Kingdom*** by A. J. Cronin, ***H. M. Pulham, Esquire*** by John P. Marquand and ****You Can't Do Business with Hitler*** by Douglas Miller. Then came December 7.

1942 Among the new books: ***Defense Will Not Win the War*** by Colonel W. F. Kernan, ****Admiral of the Ocean Sea*** by Samuel Eliot Morison, ***The Seventh Cross*** by Anna Seghers, ***Signed with Their Honour*** by James Aldridge, and ***The Unrelenting Struggle*** by Winston S. Churchill. Also in 1942, ***The Fannie Farmer Junior Cook Book*** by Wilma Lord Perkins, editor of the later editions of ***The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book.***

1943 Among the new books: ****U. S. Foreign Policy*** by Walter Lippmann, ***The Year of Decision*** by Bernard DeVoto, ***So Little Time*** by John P. Marquand.

****Indicates an Atlantic Monthly Press Book***

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A TIME FOR GREATNESS
by Herbert Agar

THE UNRELENTING STRUGGLE
THE END OF THE BEGINNING
ONWARDS TO VICTORY
by Winston S. Churchill

THE COMING SHOWDOWN
by Carl Dreher

THE NEW BELIEF IN THE COMMON MAN
by Carl J. Friedrich

WHICH KIND OF REVOLUTION?
by W. D. Herridge

ATTACK CAN WIN IN '43
by Max Werner

DEFENSE WILL NOT WIN THE WAR
WE CAN WIN THIS WAR
by Col. W. F. Kernan

BROTHERS UNDER THE SKIN
by Carey McWilliams

***YOU CAN'T DO BUSINESS WITH HITLER**
by Douglas Miller

SHARK'S FINS AND MILLET
by Ilona Ralf Sues

I SEE A NEW CHINA
by George Hogg

***U. S. FOREIGN POLICY:**
Shield of the Republic
***U. S. WAR AIMS**
by Walter Lippmann

**Indicates an Atlantic Monthly Press Book*

The COMING SHOW-DOWN DREHER
The New Belief in the Common Man
ATTACK CAN WIN IN '43
We Can Win This War
Brothers under the Skin
CAREY MCWILLIAMS
Shark's Fins and Millet
GEORGE HOGG I See a New China
U.S. FOREIGN POLICY
U.S. WAR AIMS

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THE COMPLEAT COLLECTOR AND THE TYPOGRAPHIC SCENE

(*Continued from page 62*)

museum of horribles. The influence of this recidivation has had deplorable results in America, where the quest for novelty on the part of advertisers has brought these old awkward, ugly, misshapen letters into too general use. A recent survey of modern production, intended as a printing guide, lists over a hundred of these types.

Well, where do we go from here? I am sure that I do not know. But some signs are visible. In the first volume of the *Fleuron,* published the year before the *SRL* was launched, a writer undertook, under the title of "Respice: Prospice," to indicate the trend of the future. About all he had to suggest was that in the coming years the offset process would be used more widely! The increased use of that process, together with an increase in color printing, seems to be all that can be predicted for our future. This means, of course, that our printing future is concerned with the development of machinery and not at all with the art of printing.

The further separation of the "art" of printing and the printing "business" is not wholesome, but it seems inevitable in the nearer future. There is one bright spot, which I have alluded to above—the very great increase in reputable book types which the past twenty years has seen. After the intoxication with the types of yesterday has worn off, we shall still have left us the English gifts of revived worthwhile types, and the few good faces designed in this country, and since good type design is the foundation of good printing, eventually a vigorous, sensible esthetics of the book may come into being.

Your Literary I. Q.

BY HOWARD COLLINS

Characters from Pulitzer Prize Novels 1924-1944

From the brief sketches given below, can you identify the principal characters from the Pulitzer Prize novels of the past twenty years? Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 123.

1924. A soldier, returning after the Civil War to a pious Scotch community in Iowa, finds that his sweetheart is about to have a baby, takes his cousin's blame upon himself, and marries her.

1925. After the death of her conservative husband, she applies modern methods on her farm and eventually becomes a prosperous truck farmer, specializing in asparagus.

1926. Humanely unscientific in a crisis, this doctor administrates his life-saving bacteriophage to all the victims of the plague in a West Indies island.

1927. Influenced by the head of the family she had married into, this 40-year-old woman gives up her chance of happiness with a lover in order to live up to the family's Puritanical traditions.

1928. Witnessing an accident in which five persons died inspires this priest to make theology an exact science by finding out why their lives ended at that moment.

1929. Because this Negro girl gave birth to the first of her many children in the middle of a road, he was named Unexpected.

1930. Unknown to this Navajo Indian, his wife continues to accept money from the white man who had been her lover before her marriage.

1931. This happily married mother of three children falls in love with the husband of her childhood friend.

1932. By acquiring farm land and holding onto it, this Chinese farmer rises from poverty to wealth.

1933. Twenty years after a local merchant had ruined him financially, this Southern colonel retrieves his fortunes by stealing from him 500 bales of cotton and uses the money to build a pre-war mansion.

1934. In pre-Civil War days this woman comes as a bride to a wilderness cabin in Georgia and lives a pioneer life there until, as a gray-haired woman, she welcomes her second husband home from the war.

1935. This young woman narrates the tenth year of her family's struggle to exist when, after their farm is hit by drought, their hired man deserts them, her insane sister commits suicide, and her mother dies of burns, she finally loses hope.

1936. This young man becomes a fugitive from justice when he helps his step-father to escape from jail.

1937. The Civil War and the reconstruction period form the background for the adventures of this Southern belle.

1938. This Bostonian's biography was written at his son's request by Horatio Willing, from letters, family notes, and the biographer's own idolatrous memories.

1939. During hard times in the hammock country district of Florida, this boy's pet fawn brought him face to face with his first great tragedy.

1940. Returning to his farm home in the Dust Bowl after a stretch in prison, this Okie migrates with his family to California, where circumstances influence him to become a labor organizer.

1942. The story of life in a Southern city, of two wrecked marriages, and of a great wrong done an innocent Negro boy are all told by this old man, a member of decayed aristocracy.

1943. This American playboy, living in Germany, loses his own freedom in trying to rescue a wealthy Jewish financier from the Nazis.

1944. The story of this man's successful life is carried along with the inevitable changes in his home town, Wyattville, Iowa, and the development of the great city of Chicago, where he made his fortune.

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The Phoenix Nest

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN 1933 we published "Reviewing Ten Years: A Personal Record of *The Saturday Review of Literature,*" chiefly written by your humble servant. It told the tale of our progress from the Ides of March in 1920 when I first met Royal J. Davis of the *New York Evening Post* (now, after many vicissitudes, the *New York Post*) and took over from him, *pro tem,* the *Book Review* of that paper. Well, grandchildren, that historic moment is now nigh on a quarter of a century ago, and I'm glad to say that the old mag is today going stronger than ever.

Now is the Twentieth Anniversary of our own Independence Day. Our first issue all-on-our-own, under the new title *The Saturday Review of Literature,* appeared on August 2, 1924. Today we have quadrupled the circulation we had then, in the days when we worked in an old converted brewery, alongside *Time* magazine! We graduated thence to 45th Street, and have only deserted it once for a short period. Today we are doing business "at the old stand," with a newly-decorated waiting-room to our office, and desk adjuncts such as Pendaflex. Jack Cominsky has even promised us office murals, though none have I yet descried. Anyway, lads and lassies, we're now well out of the red in spite of the war, and feeling younger every day that we grow older. We're proud of our past, present, and future. We're independent as that proverbial porker in his winter scene, and mean to keep so; and to hit out at anything we consider a national disgrace.

I can begin by recording that, though at least three of the old original editorial staff, Henry Seidel Canby, William Rose Benét, and Amy Loveman, remain with the magazine, since "last writing" we have experienced various changes of editorship, before shaking down to our present undefeatable task force. In September, 1936, Mr. Canby retired temporarily to concentrate upon his literary work, and he was succeeded in the chair of editor-in-chief by the dynamic and recently controversy-distinguished Benny DeVoto, the pistol-packing grammarian from Utah *via* Harvard. Benny spent a hellbent-for-heaven year and a half with us, till March, 1938. He wrote a lot, slugging it out with many a literary issue. He gave the *Review,* perhaps then dreaming too fondly of the groves of Academe, a shot of real adrenalin—till the old lady took to stomping round the office "full of strange oaths and bearded like a pard." One of her pards, Chris Morley, made off later with the beard, when he decided to leave us. But I anticipate.

George Stevens, a charming Gentleman of the Old South, succeeded him. That ex-Nestor, then of W. W. Norton, is now the Leaping Fire of J. B. Lippincott. He had been our managing editor before entering the sanctum. But no sanctum could really hold George! He used frequently to play hookey with Noble Cathcart, to throw pop bottles at the umpire up at the Polo Grounds. However, he lasted two years, till 1940. Don't mind my flip-

—Drawings by William Rose Benét from early issues of The Phoenix Nest.

pancy! Both men were A-1 editors. Noble A. Cathcart, our publisher, who had stuck with us from the old days on the *Post,* finally left us to go to the Crowell Publishing Company. In May, 1938, Harrison Smith, whose former publishing firms were Cape & Smith, and then Smith & Haas, bought the *Review;* and in March, 1940, when George Stevens resigned, a new editorial board came into being, consisting of Elmer Davis (now head of the OWI, then novelist and CBS commentator), Mr. Canby, Miss Loveman, and Harrison Smith. The new executive editor was Norman Cousins, until then associated with *Current History.* It was during this new set-up that we sojourned briefly over on Madison Avenue, in a building standing on the original site of the old Day house, made famous by the stage adaptation of Clarence Day Jr.'s famous "Life with Father." In that purlieu Hal Smith was then running some four magazines abreast, poised like a circus rider on wildly cantering steeds. The offices were pigeon-hole size and dusty. We finally footed it back to 45th Street, where we are now dug in for the duration.

On the first of July, 1942, The Saturday Review Associates, Inc., was organized as a new company, independent of affiliation with any other publication. Stockholders were E. L. De Golyer, Henry Canby, Leonard Bacon, Rebecca Lowrie, Amy Loveman, Norman Cousins, and Harrison Smith, who was elected president of the firm. Three months later, J. R. Cominsky, for fifteen years a business and advertising executive of *The New York Times,* took over the general business direction of the *SRL.* He became our executive vice-president and treasurer, and a stockholder of The Saturday Review Associates. That was October 1; and, in the two years minus several months since then, we have sweated out every flak barrage hurled at us by subscribers overcome by our new energy; have become widely known as Cominsky's "Flying Tigers" ("They drink human blood!"); have plunged through national sensation after national sensation, in bloodcurdling controversies with representatives of the House of Morgan and the U. S. Senate; have put on weight and advertising; have become known as snappy dressers; have attained a circulation of 47,000; and have done everything else nobody expected of us, except run for Congress. Some credit, I admit, must also go to Norman Cousins, who now holds the middleweight belt of American editorship, and has even won the decision over such veterans of debate as the Isolationists and the U. S. Post Office. Not averse to verse, Norman has always encouraged my own lucubrations, and for this reason alone, if it were not for plentiful others, I have always been found in his corner with the smelling-salts, a cold towel, and a word of advice out of the corner of my mouth. A shrewd remark from ring-wise old Benét, and the next palooka usually ploughed the canvas with his nose, in a round or two. The bigger they were, the harder I have seen them drop!

IT is all what *The Detroit Free Press* referred to along about Christmas of last year, when they said of us:

> It gets so fiercely excited about things. It is the only national publication which still retains that fiery earnestness for causes and crusades in which its editors are interested.

I will say that what drew a letter of reproof from my old friend, Thomas W. Lamont, once a backer of the *SRL* —and a more square-shooting one no periodical ever had—was an innocent reference of mine to a book of Carl Dreher's published by Little, Brown of Boston, and called "The Coming Show-Down." The words, as I remember them, were Dreher's, though I thought they made sense as to the big

(*Please turn to page* 72)

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1925 PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY CRITICISM by I. A. Richards. MODERN AMERICAN POETRY, 3rd Edition, by Louis Untermeyer.

1926 MICROBE HUNTERS by Paul de Kruif. ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE PRAIRIE YEARS by Carl Sandburg.

1927 MOTHER INDIA by Katherine Mayo. MAIN CURRENTS IN AMERICAN THOUGHT by Vernon Louis Parrington.

1928 ELIZABETH AND ESSEX by Lytton Strachey. ORLANDO by Virginia Woolf.

1929 DODSWORTH by Sinclair Lewis. MIDDLETOWN by Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd.

1930 A TREATISE ON MONEY by John Maynard Keynes. FLOWERING JUDAS by Katherine Anne Porter.

1931 AMERICAN HUMOR by Constance Rourke. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS.

1932 *1919* by John Dos Passos. SHERMAN by Lloyd Lewis.

1933 THE LAST ADAM by James Gould Cozzens. ROCKWELLKENTIANA by Rockwell Kent.

1934 HALF MILE DOWN by William Beebe. THE ROBBER BARONS by Matthew Josephson.

1935 NORTH TO THE ORIENT by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. THE ROOT AND THE FLOWER by L. H. Myers.

1936 THE WAY OF A TRANSGRESSOR by Negley Farson. GAUDY NIGHT by Dorothy L. Sayers.

1937 PARADISE by Esther Forbes. THE EDUCATION OF HYMAN KAPLAN by Leonard Q. Ross.

1938 THE TYRANNY OF WORDS by Stuart Chase. MY SISTER EILEEN by Ruth McKenney.

1939 SEASONED TIMBER by Dorothy Canfield. ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE WAR YEARS by Carl Sandburg.

1940 MRS. MINIVER by Jan Struther. TO THE FINLAND STATION by Edmund Wilson.

1941 AMBASSADOR DODD'S DIARY. IN THIS OUR LIFE by Ellen Glasgow.

1942 THOROFARE by Christopher Morley. MY WORLD—AND WELCOME TO IT by James Thurber. THEY WERE EXPENDABLE by W. L. White.

1943 FOUR QUARTETS by T. S. Eliot. THE BATTLE IS THE PAY-OFF by Ralph Ingersoll. THE HUMAN COMEDY by William Saroyan.

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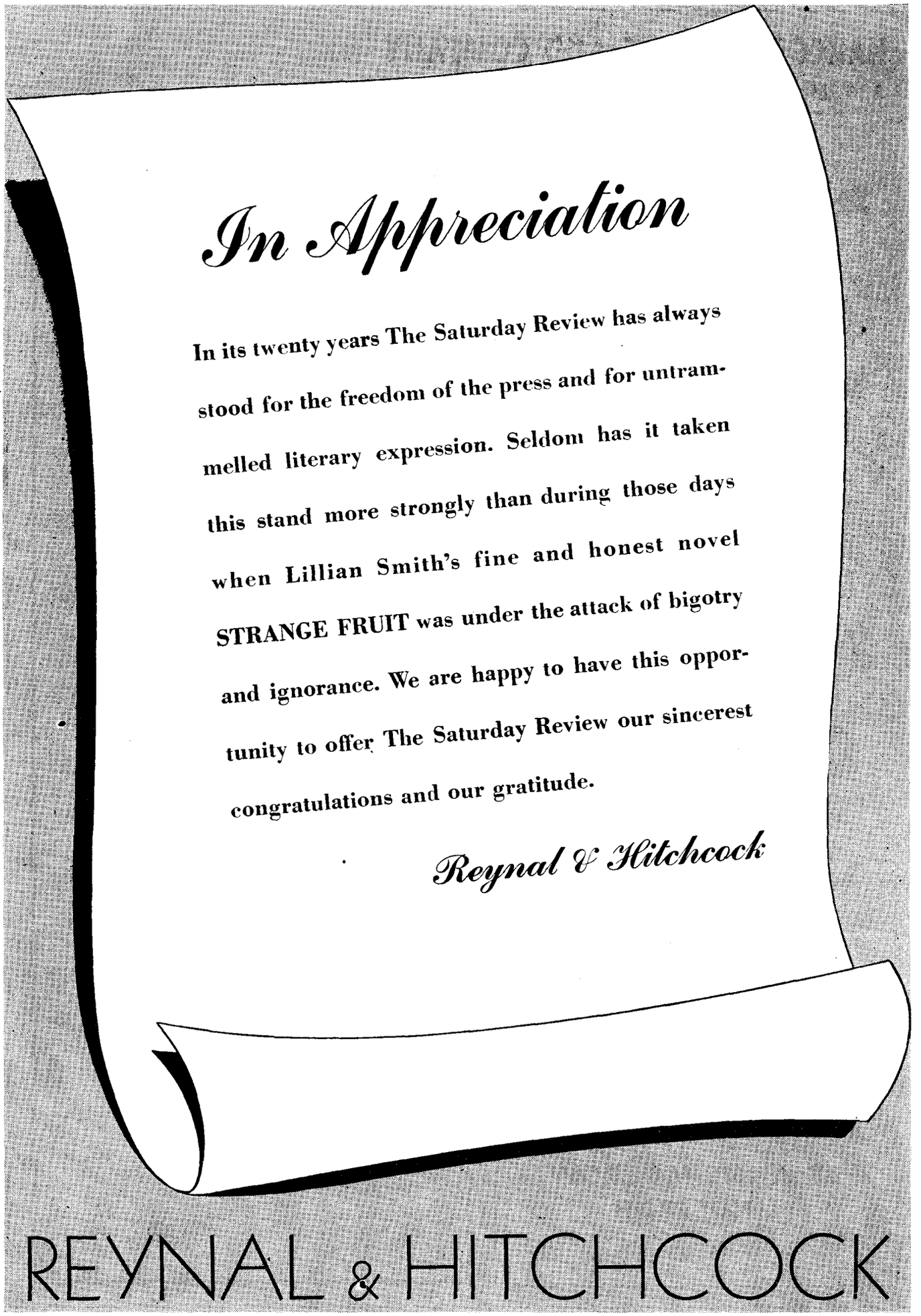
In Appreciation
In its twenty years The Saturday Review has always stood for the freedom of the press and for untrammelled literary expression. Seldom has it taken this stand more strongly than during those days when Lillian Smith's fine and honest novel STRANGE FRUIT was under the attack of bigotry and ignorance. We are happy to have this opportunity to offer The Saturday Review our sincerest congratulations and our gratitude.
Reynal & Hitchcock
REYNAL & HITCHCOCK

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In addition to STRANGE FRUIT, other recent distinguished Reynal & Hitchcock books of special interest to Saturday Review readers.

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AIRMAN'S ODYSSEY

REYNAL & HITCHCOCK

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(*Continued from page* 68)
corporations salting away considerable war profits. I still think so. But them words was fightin' words to Tom; and suddenly one day, in my summer eyrie by the Atlantic Ocean, I was astonished to see that a controversy was raging anent in the public prints. Most of the public prints' editors took the side of the eminent banker and were glad to see the poet (all poets being cuckoo) get his comeuppance. But Tom was most Chesterfieldian in his approach; so I did my best to meet him on that ground. It ended by neither of us convincing the other. But everybody had a good time. (P. S.

Now I am trying to get a good quote out of "Business as a System of Power," by Robert A. Brady, Columbia University Press. If I could only hit on the right one, perhaps I could draw Eric Johnston. In an epoch of growing monopoly-capitalism, Mr. Johnston seems to be trying to sell a sort of People's Capitalism which to my mind is somewhat of a bedtime story. I don't doubt Mr. Johnston's sincerity, and he is certainly the best President of the U. S. Chamber that we have ever had; but I see him as a sort of Jack, The Giant Killer, who still believes that the Giants are Men of Good Will. [*Winsor McKay could have drawn it!*] There was a wonderful photograph recently of Eric, or Little by Little, in Russia, smiling the American Business Smile of Good Will, surrounded by a group of Russian industrialists who looked—well, sort of baffled. [They say the Russians are realists.])

A project, one of many, that Norman Cousins started in 1942, and which is still being carried out by the *SRL*, is a cultural inventory of the United States. I don't know what more valuable thing a magazine of our type could undertake. To date, we have covered not only the Southwest (May 16, 1942), but the Deep South (to which I refer certain furious correspondents of mine who advise us Northerners to mind our own business and leave the problems of the South *to* the South!), the Old South (*ditto!*), New England, and California. This September we are planning to do the Ohio Valley. Our idea is to keep vitally in touch with our country, which we would exchange for no other; to find out what our regional problems really are; to be an influence for unity and for the rational solution of the problems. What is the real State of the Nation (to borrow a title from Dos Passos)? How do its "symptoms seem to sagashuate?" What's the condition of its gray matter? We'll leave the Gallup Polls to Gallup, and trot our own way toward finding out.

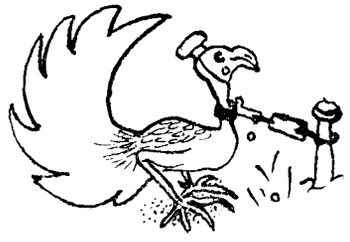
Another project that has been pretty near to our heart has been that of the Anisfield Awards. You might call it an extra-curricular activity, but it's on a vital subject. The awards of $1,000 each are given for "the best book on race relations and for the best volume in the general field of fiction, poetry, or biography, which is of such a character that it will aid in the sympathetic understanding and constructive treatment of race relations." What is more important at home today? Even our endeavor to present to you how our Government actually ticks, as illustrated by Mr. Cousins's visit to the Halls of Congress, under the ciceronage of Senator Taft, is no more important than this. In February, 1943, through the award fund established by Mrs. Edith Wolf of Cleveland, Ohio, in memory of her father, for the second time the *SRL* made a double award, one to "Negroes in Brazil" by Professor Donald Pierson, published by the University of Chicago Press, and one to "Dust Tracks on a Road" by Zora Neale Hurston, published by J. B. Lippincott Company. Doctor Pierson revealed an intimate and sympathetic acquaintance with the Negro elements in Brazil, and Miss Hurston's book was the personal story of a Negro woman who became a fine scholar, retaining her appreciation of human values and her sense of humor. The Phoenix Nest is proud that, in its own minor way, it has consistently fought for the recognition of the Negro in America as representing some of our finest citizens and best patriots; and will continue to fight for their right to vote throughout this country —a right long since awarded them by the Constitution of the United States and filched from them by violent, un-American elements.

The *SRL* will also always fight for things being what they seem in literature, and against false pretences. It was through no personal animus, but in the interests of truth and pure literary pabulum that we lately denounced a certain book, purporting to be a treasury of exact information, as nothing of the kind. The book was a "Thesaurus of the Arts" by one Albert E. Weir, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons. Professor Paul Henry Lang of Columbia University reviewed its pretensions for us, its inaccuracies, its lack of true values, its omissions. Convinced of the meretriciousness of this publication the *SRL* denounced it in a signed editorial. Thus we hope always to pillory any book that we regard as an imposition upon the reading public.

The recent article by Sinclair Lewis on Benny DeVoto's "The Literary Fallacy" was one of our efforts in the direction of an open forum on any subject of acute literary interest. A bale of comment of every color and description has been printed as a result. In this category, a new feature called "Strictly Personal," which gives many important people an opportunity to express themselves on matters they consider of national importance, has drawn some hard-hitting contributions.

Intelligent action in regard to literary censorship has, in my opinion, included Norman Cousins's controversy with the Post Office in regard to the banning in Boston of "Strange Fruit"; and his reduction of the muddle over Title V of the Soldiers Vote Act of 1944 to a matter of semantics, thereupon arranging a meeting between Senator Taft and a representative of the Army Library Service. The Army's interpretation of the Act had resulted in barring from soldiers' reading both Kitty Bowens's book on Justice Holmes and Charles Beard's history of "The Republic!"

Yes, I'm doing a little bragging. I'll go right on and brag a bit about my next-door neighbor now! In this issue you see Mrs. Kingsley's 541st Double-Crostic! The Double-Crostic is an *SRL* discovery. The first one appeared on March 31, 1934. The 500th, last fall, was made the occasion for a party for Mrs. Kingsley at the Coffee House, and a piece in *The New Yorker* by Philip Hamburger. In addition to doing Double-Crostics for us, Mrs. Kingsley now does one a month for *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*, which is clamoring for more. She has



also done *sixteen volumes* of fifty Double-Crostics each, a matter which gives me a violent migraine! To her, being a best-seller is awfully old hat. This fall, I'm told, we are to start publishing a twin edition: the present volume which comes out twice a year, and a sort of Double-Crostic for the Millions, an easier edition. Each spring and fall the Hard One and the Easy One; sort of Jekyll and Hyde!

Why not be big about it, too, and throw some of the cut flowers over

(*Please turn to page* 76)

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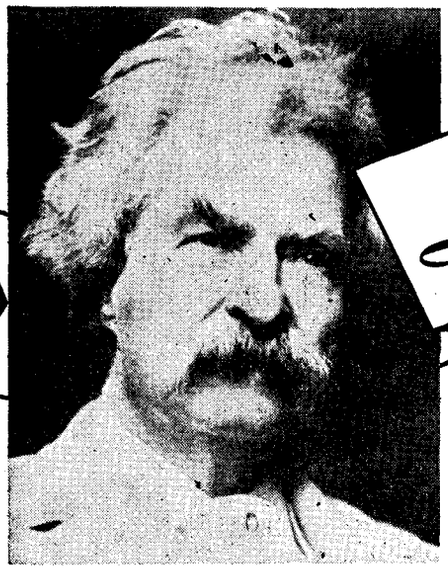

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Harper

in the past two decades as have been notable in all

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Saturday Review *most enjoyed reading in those years*

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(*Continued from page 72*)

to Trade Winds, where that Handsome Young Man on the Publishing Trapeze, Bennett Cerf, has actually become a national institution. *Me,* could *I* become a National Institution—like Nabisco? I bite—not my thumbs at him—but my nails to the quick. Why, by golly, Bennett is frequently reprinted in *The Reader's Digest*—which some months ago described his column as the best in America. Unfair, unfair! I'll picket him. Why this "shakescene dressed in daw's feathers" (or however that old spite-line went from the boys in the backroom who envied Will Shakspur), this "upstart crow" (*that* was what was dressed in the feathers—must have been peacock's feathers—hunh?) why, this prattling babe still wet behind the ears—oh, never mind. I'm just terribly, terribly hurt, that's all.

The *SRL* has always been interested in the reactions of writers and critics to the Pulitzer Awards. We have usually polled them prior to same. This year we reversed that procedure and polled them *after* the awards were made public. We think it keeps the Pulitzer judges on their toes; and they ought to be; to make these awards really mean something in America.

Departments? Our Guide to Books on Music, our Special Educational Number, our Guide to Reference Books have become fixtures; and when Mary Gould Davis joined the *SRL* staff in the Fall of 1943 she bought a treatment to the job of handling the yearly output of children's books that has won her encomia from librarians.

Writers for us in the last ten years? Well, I remember the acute criticism of Elmer Davis. I remember "Art of the Night," a coverage of reviews of "literary drama" by George Jean Nathan. Hervey Allen, on January 13, 1934, did a widely quoted piece on the sources of "Anthony Adverse." Thomas Wolfe took at least three instalments to do "Story of a Novel." Three essays, "Literature of Horror," interpreted contemporary literature in the light of psychoanalysis. You needn't think we've run out of ideas, either. What did you think of the job we did about George Bernard Shaw's 88th birthday in our issue of July 22?

We've tried to pay increasing attention to all the arts, and to take the attitude that Art is Life, is of the essence; hence what is going on in the world, as well as what is going on in books *about* the world, is of vital interest. As the Directors once remarked, "We can hardly afford to strike a pose of splendid literary isolation in an age of interdependence." Then there's poetry, too. This department will continue to go to bat for poetry at all times, and see that as much of it is used as possible.

I'm going to end by introducing an old friend—a better man than I am, Gunga Din, and one who once conducted with me an *SRL* column. He left us some years ago to devote himself to such masterworks as "Kitty Foyle" and "Thorofare." (And you watch out now for "The Middle Kingdom," in the Harcourt, Brace catalog!)

Ladies and Gentlemen, *P. E. Q. Quercus!* (he writes from "Green Escape, L. I."):

ENIGMA IN THE WORDPILE

SIR: I should be sorry if your 20th anniversary issue (pronounced issue, *not* ishue) appeared without a wellwish word from one of your ancient collaborators. Equally sorry if you forget that the same date marks 20 years since the death of Joseph Conrad, to my taste the greatest novelist of double meanings in our lifetime. As a salutary reminder that a great writer may also be very weak in syntax, I cherish (and always use as paradigm in my classes) the following sentence from Conrad's "The Duel" (published also under the title "The Point of Honor"):—

> Fouché was trying the fit of a court suit, in which his young and accomplished fiancée had declared her wish to have his portrait painted on porcelain.

This is one of my favorite examples of Enigma in the Wordpile. There are also some honeys in that novel by young Lieutenant Pennell, "Rome Hanks," which I think of as "Gone with the Adverse."

Good luck for another twenty years. Myself, I savor the exquisite taste of silence, and shall yet become (as Henry James said of Balzac) the Benedictine of the actual.

This from mine old, beloved lord and mentor at Colyuming these Many Years Agone!

Someone Remember, After Us

By Lt. Simons Roof (JG) USNR

SOMEONE remember, after us,
our bitter earth was sometimes sweet;
that on a cannon-gutted crag
our faith grew like a rose from stone,
and in the labyrinth of dreams
on nights that stunned with calm, we saw
the madman in the mirror, one's
own face, become another soul,
the fighter's with the wounded eyes.

And if you will, remember this,
how from the grief of dark goodbye,
those lost on farthest fields and seas,
we turned to light of smiles and sun,
reread a tattered letter's peace;
found sleep a myth, a bridge that swept
between our earth and worlds afar,
and over arc of shot and smoke
sometimes would sight our guns at stars.

Remember this, our comradeship,
the cards in fist and fist relaxed,
the shouts at dawn, the songs at dusk,
a glance like balm repairing pain;
through brush, the hand that pulled us on,
through waves, the hand that balanced life;
until a cap afloat to West,
a tree-caught scarf, a muddy shoe,
like ghosts remained of proven love.
Remember—under singing skies,

Whose sweetest song is ours unsung—
the power of our imaged land,
the land of yours; its glint of spires,
its lilies stirring under snow,
its splinter sounds of chimes, its domes
to scale, its heritage of faith;
remember how, when nailed by hate,
we saw its God in a golden cloud.

Lt. Simons Roof, twenty-four years old, a graduate of the University of North Carolina, is Executive Officer of the U.S.S. YMS 98.

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What is New in Publishing?

THAT is a question which was answered twenty years ago with the report of the birth of *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Five years ago this coming October that question brought word of the formation of Duell, Sloan and Pearce. The company was organized as a collaboration of young and vigorous talent with new ideas based on considerable practical experience in book publishing. Established during unsettled times under a plan for gradual growth, Duell, Sloan and Pearce faced its problems with unprejudiced adaptability. In less than the three-year period it had anticipated, the new firm achieved sound business strength. Believing from the start that the selection of authors and the publishers' continuing relations with them were of first concern, the opening announcement of the new company said: "Since the selection of authors is of basic importance the following names are mentioned to indicate the general interests and initial activities of the company." This list included:

ARCHIBALD MAC LEISH
CONRAD AIKEN
ERSKINE CALDWELL
HALLIE FLANAGAN
MARTHA GELLHORN
ALFRED M. BINGHAM
WALTER HOVING
ROCKWELL KENT
LEE SIMONSON
FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

In October 1939 when first announcement of the new book publishing firm was made, there had been no major development in the industry for about a decade. Since then, the reading public and the book trade have come to expect a balanced list with a wide range of interest among Duell, Sloan and Pearce books. Outstanding authors have contributed their work in the fields of the novel, sociology, history, economics, humor, war reporting, photography, art and architecture, gastronomy, technology, child care, biography and autobiography, sport, folkways, radio, aviation, military affairs, travel, the short story, and mystery fiction. Among such authors not already mentioned above are:

JOHN O'HARA
G. A. BORGESE
HOWARD FAST
LOUIS FISCHER
M. F. K. FISHER
BERRY FLEMING
WALDO FRANK
IOLA FULLER
DOROTHY B. HUGHES
ROBERT EDMOND JONES
STEFAN LORANT
JOSEPH MITCHELL
THEODORE PRATT
HAROLD RUGG
GAETANO SALVEMINI
ROBERT SHERROD
SHRIDHARANI
WALLACE STEGNER
WILLIAM STEIG
ELSWYTH THANE
WILLIAM B. ZIFF

Write for the new Fall 1944 DS&P catalogue

Duell, Sloan and Pearce
NEW YORK

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1916 W. H. Hudson
GREEN MANSIONS

1917 Joseph Hergesheimer
THE THREE BLACK PENNYS

1919 H. L. Mencken
THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE

1920 Willa Cather
YOUTH AND THE BRIGHT MEDUSA

T. S. Eliot
POEMS

1921 Knut Hamsun
GROWTH OF THE SOIL

1922 Walter de la Mare
MEMOIRS OF A MIDGET

1923 Kahlil Gibran
THE PROPHET

Katherine Mansfield
THE DOVE'S NEST

Ivan Bunin
THE GENTLEMAN FROM SAN FRANCISCO

1924 Ladislas Reymont
THE PEASANTS

Thomas Mann
BUDDENBROOKS

1926 Thomas Beer
THE MAUVE DECADE

Oswald Spengler
THE DECLINE OF THE WEST

Carl Van Vechten
NIGGER HEAVEN

1927 Willa Cather
DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP

Logan Clendening
THE HUMAN BODY

Thomas Mann
THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN

Sigrid Undset
KRISTIN LAVRANSDATTER

André Gide
THE COUNTERFEITERS

1928 Ernest Newman
STORIES OF THE GREAT OPERAS

1930 Elizabeth Morrow
THE PAINTED PIG

Franz Kafka
THE CASTLE

1932 Elinor Wylie
COLLECTED POEMS

1933 Robert Nathan
ONE MORE SPRING

Jules Romains
MEN OF GOOD WILL

1934 Mikhail Sholokhov
AND QUIET FLOWS THE DON

Dashiell Hammett
THE THIN MAN

James M. Cain
THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE

1935 Clarence Day
LIFE WITH FATHER

1936 I. J. Singer
THE BROTHERS ASHKENAZI

A. E. Housman
MORE POEMS

1937 Conrad Richter
THE SEA OF GRASS

1938 Oscar Lewis
THE BIG FOUR

1939 Elizabeth Bowen
THE DEATH OF THE HEART

1940 Newman White
SHELLEY

1941 William Alexander Percy
LANTERNS ON THE LEVEE

William L. Shirer
BERLIN DIARY

Arturo Castiglioni
A HISTORY OF MEDICINE

1942 H. L. Mencken
A NEW DICTIONARY OF QUOTATIONS

1943 Fritz Kahn
MAN IN STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

John Hersey
INTO THE VALLEY

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What **BORZOI** on a book stands for

1944

John Hersey
A Bell for Adano

Leland Stowe
They Shall Not Sleep

Carl L. Becker
How New Will the Better World Be?

Harry Brown
A Walk in the Sun

Joseph Kessel
Army of Shadows

Thomas Mann
Joseph the Provider

Richard Edes Harrison
Look at the World

Angela Thirkell
Growing Up

Gerstle Mack
The Land Divided

Robert Glass Cleland
From Wilderness to Empire

T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings
Good-bye, Mr. Chippendale

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SRL's Contributors

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Herewith the backbone of* The Saturday Review*—spelled out in the names of the approximately* 4,000 *writers who have contributed to our pages since August* 2, 1924. *Many of these writers have been constant contributors throughout the years of our existence; some have been represented by an occasional, and a few by a single, article of importance. A number are no longer alive though in most instances their reputation has lived after them.*

A

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Abbott, Prof. Wilbur Cortez
Abbott, Johnson
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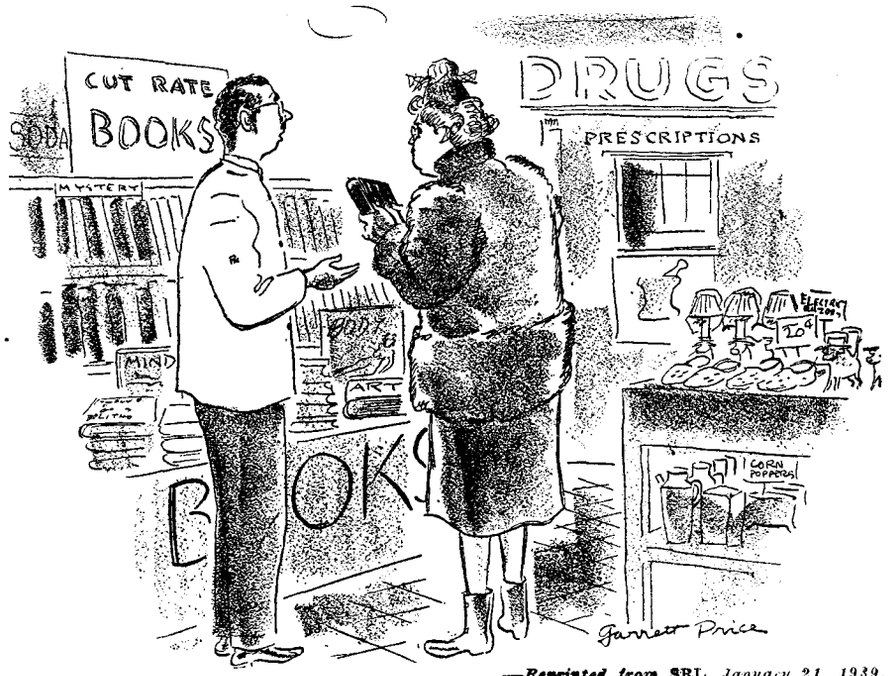

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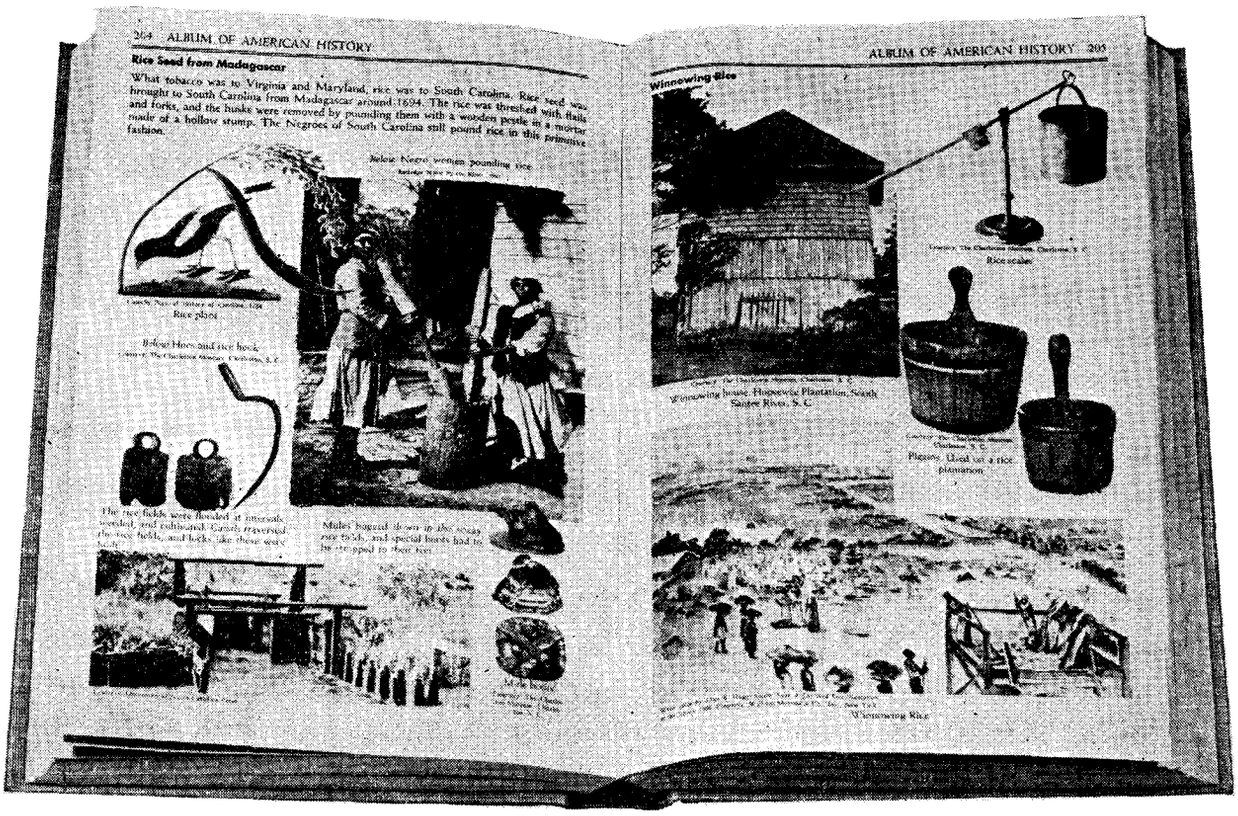
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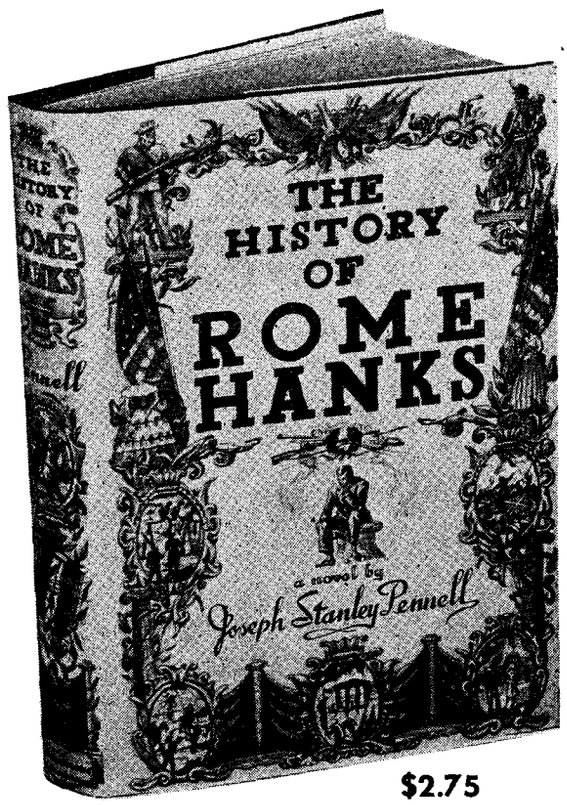

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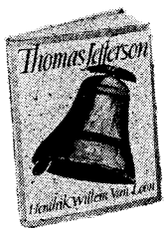

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"Here's a hot number, Dante's 'Inferno.'"

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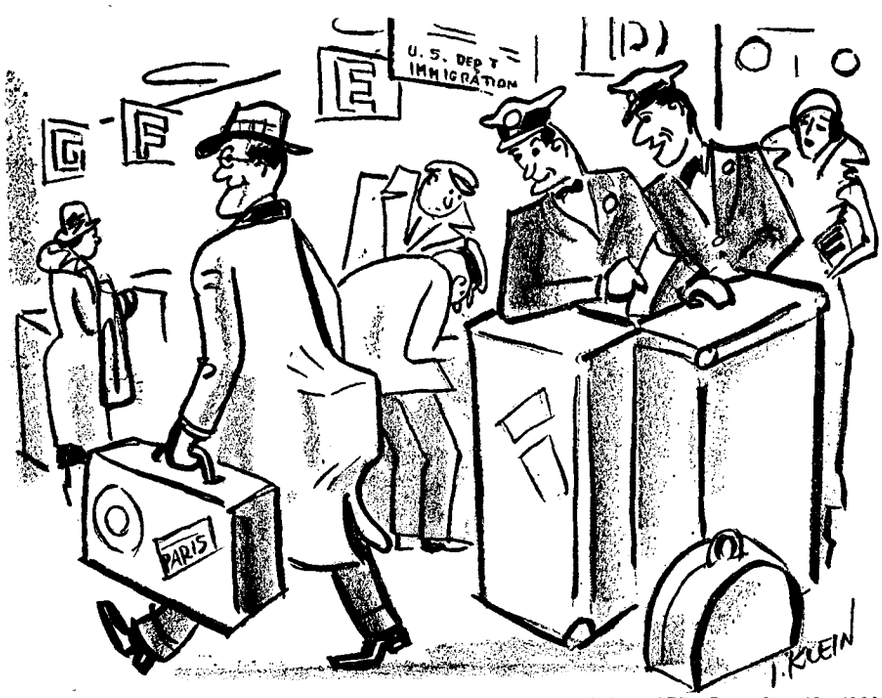

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Lloyd, David
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Longstreet, Stephen
Longstreth, Edward
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Lord, Russell
Lorentz, Pare
Lorenz, Theodor
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Loth, David
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Loveland, Gilbert C.
Loveman, Amy
Loving, Pierre
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Lunt, Dudley Cammett
Luquiens, F. B.
Lutes, Della T.
Luzzato, Jack
Lydenberg, H. W.
Lynch, Denis Tilden
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Lyon, George W.
Lyons, Eugene
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Maas, Willard
Mabbott, Thomas O.
Mabon, John Scott
Macauley, Rose
MacCracken, H. Noble
MacDougall, Robert S.
Macrae, John
Macy, John
Madariaga, Salvador de
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Marks, Robert W.
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Marlett, Melba G.
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Marx, Olga
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—*Reprinted from* SRL, *May 6, 1939.*

"You can't put it down. Every chapter ends in the middle of a sentence."

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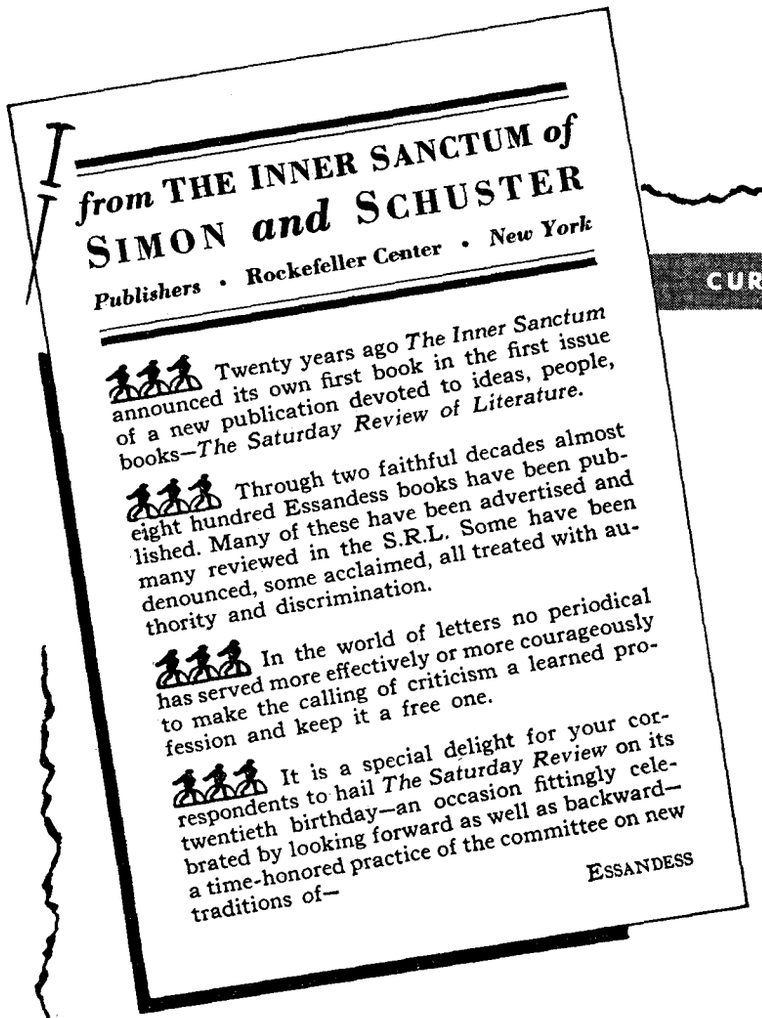
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Miles, Josephine
Miles, Maj. Sherman
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Miles, Vaughn
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Mongan, Agnes
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Morley, Felix
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Muirhead, James F.
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Murray, Gilbert
Murray, R. H.
Muvaffok, Nermin
Muzzey, David S.
Myers, Charles S.
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Nadejena, Lydia
Nadig, Henry Davis
Naft, Stephen
Nagel, Ernest
Naismith, Grace
Nash, Ogden
Nason, Leonard
Nathan, George Jean
Nathan, Robert
Nathanson, Jerome
Naumburg, Carl T.
Naumburg, Elsa H.
Naylor, Rex Maurice
Nazaroff, Alexander I.
Nicolay, Helen
Nicoll, John R. A.
Nicrosi, Mittie Holt
Niebuhr, Reinhold
Niehoff, Ilah
Nikolaieff, A. M.
Niles, Blair
Niles, Edward A.
Niles, Emory H.
Niles, Lt. John J.
Nitze, William A.
Neale, John E.
Needham, Gwendolyn B.
Needham, T. J.
Needham, Wilbur
Neergaard, Charles F.
Neff, Emory
Neher, Fred
Neider, Charles
Neifeld, M. R.
Neihardt, John G.
Neilson, William Allen
Nelson, Boris Erich
Nelson, Charles Brown
Nelson, E. W.
Nelson, Frederick
Nelson, James
Nelson, Lawrence E.
Nelson, Starr
Nelson, Victor F.
Nettleton, George Henry
Neuberger, Richard L.
Neugass, James I. N.
Neumann, Daisy
Nevins, Allan
Nevinson, Henry W.
Newbolt, Sir Henry
Newborg, Katherine
Newman, Bernard J.
Newman, Frances
Newman, Louis I.
Newton, A. Edward
Nicoll, Allardyce
Nicholl, Louise Townsend
Nichols, Dudley
Nichols, John T.
Nichols, Spencer Van B.
Nicolson, Harold
Nicolson, Margaret E.
Nicolson, Marjorie
Nock, Albert Jay
Nock, Arthur D.
Nock, Samuel A.
Nomad, Max
Norden, Heinz
Nordhoff, Charles
Nordyke, Lewis T.
Norman, Charles
Norman, Hilda
Normanton, Helena
Norris, Frank
North, A. T.
North, Sterling
Norton, Henry K.
Northrup, Filmer S. C.
Nostitz von Hindenburg, Baroness Helene
Notestein, Wallace
Nourse, Edwin C.
Novak, Arne
Noyes, Alexander Dana
Noyes, Charles E.
Noyes, Edward A.
Noyes, Edward S.
Nyland, Waino
Nystrom, Paul H.

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Oak, V. V.
Oaks, Gladys
Oberholtzer, Ellis P.
O'Brien, Justin
O'Brien, Father Robert D.
O'Brien, Frederick
O'Brien, Kate
O'Conor, Norreys Jephson
Oddy, John
Odegard, Peter H.
Odell, George C. D.
O'Dell, Scott
Odets, Clifford
O'Donnell, E. P.
O'Donnell, Peadar
Odum, Howard W.
Oenslager, Donald M.
O'Faolain, Sean
Ogburn, Charlton
Ogburn, Charlton, Jr.
Ogburn, William F.
Ogden, C. K.
Ogden, Harriet C.
Ogden, Robert Morris
Ogilvie, Mary Gould
O'Hearn, Walter
O'Higgins, Harvey J.
O'Kiersey, Micael
Olcott, Frances J.
Olivier, Edith
Oliver, John Rathbone
Olmstead, A. T.
Olmsted, Stanley
Olschki, Leonardo
Olsen, Valentine
Olson, Elder
Olson, Lawrence
Olson, Ted
O'Malley, Ernie
Omura, Martha Pilger
O'Neil, George
Opdycke, John B.
Oppenheimer, George S.
Ornitz, Samuel
O'Rorke, F. J. H.
Orrick, James
Orton, Vrest
O'Ryan, Maj. Gen. John F.
Osborn, Margaret
Osborne, Thomas Mott
Osgood, Charles G.
Osgood, Phillips E.
O'Sheel, Shaemus
Ostenso, Martha
O'Sullivan, Seumas
Otis, Emily
Overstreet, Bonaro
Overstreet, H. A.
Overton, Jacqueline
Overton, Grant
Owen, David
Owen, Helen Hammett
Owen, Russell

P

Packard, Sidney R.
Page, Arthur W.
Page, Leigh
Pahlow, Edwin W.
Paine, Arnold
Paine, Ralph D.
Painter, Anna M.
Pakenham, T. Compton
Palmer, Frederick
Palmer, Vance
Pangborn, H. L.
Panou, George Saranton
Pantaleoni, Guido, Jr.
Panunzio, Constantine
Paramore, Edward D.
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Parker, Clifford S.
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Parshley, H. M.
Parsons, Geoffrey
Partridge, Bellamy
Pasvolsky, Leo
Patch, Howard R.
Patchen, Kenneth
Patri, Angelo
Pattee, Fred L.
Patterson, Alicia
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Paul, Elliot
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Peixotto, Ernest
Pell, Herbert C., Jr.
Pemberton, Murdock
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Percy, William Alexander
Pergament, Lola
Perkins, Dexter
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Perkins, Henry A.
Perkins, Lucy Fitch
Perkins, Mary
Perlman, Selig
Perrine, J. O.
Perry, Bliss

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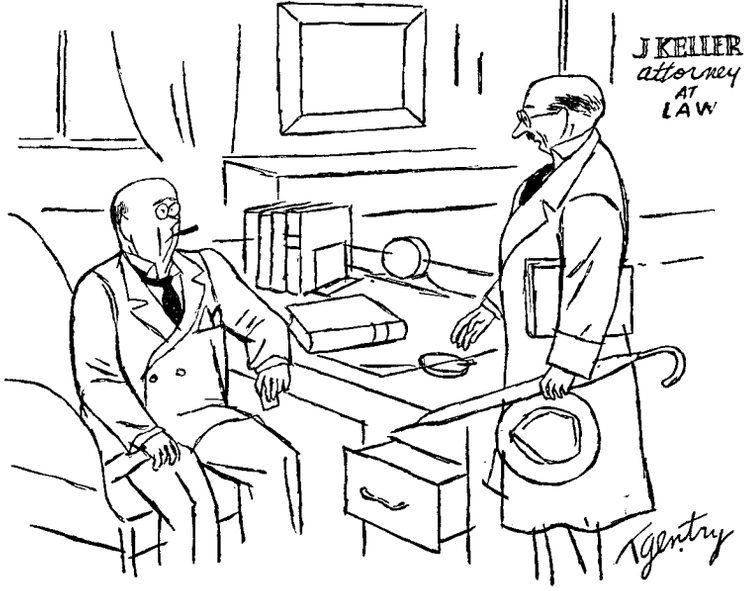

—*Reprinted from* SRL, *June 27, 1942.*

"I'd like to break off with the Book-of-the-Month Club without causing any hard feelings."

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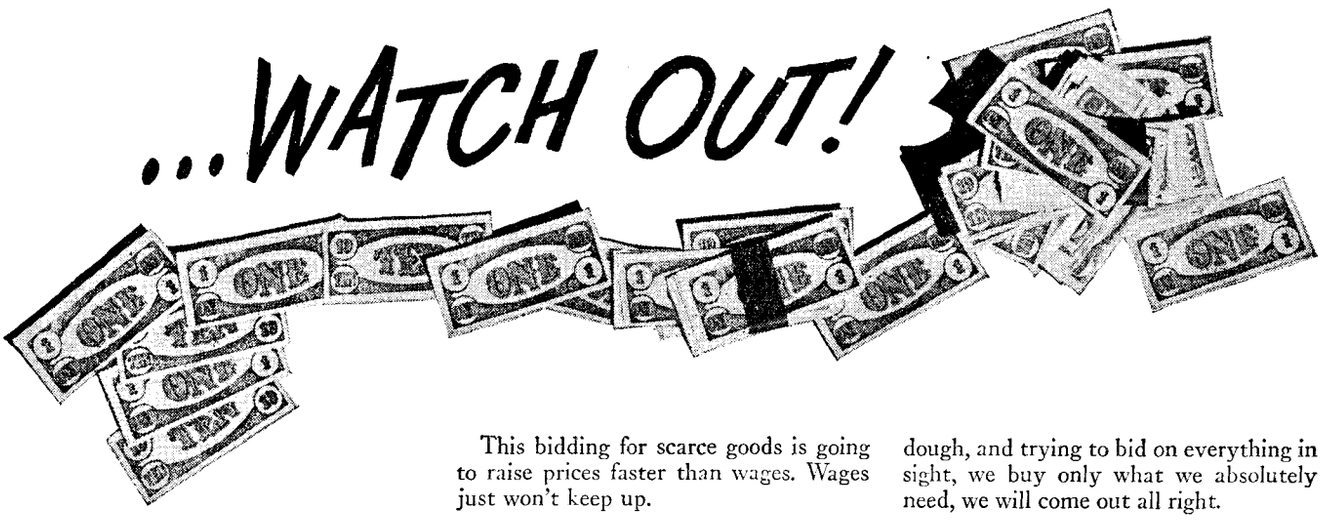
IF YOU'RE MAKING MORE MONEY

...WATCH OUT!



WE WANT TO WARN YOU, before you read this page, that you've got to use your head to understand it.

We also want to warn you that—if you don't bother to read it carefully enough to understand it—you may wake up after this war as poor as a church mouse.

• • •

This year Americans are going to make —minus taxes—125 billion dollars.

But this year, we civilians are not going to have 125 billion dollars' worth of goods to spend this on. We're only going to have 80 billion dollars' worth. The rest of our goods are being used to fight the war.

That leaves 45 billion dollars' worth of money burning in our jeans.

Well, we can do 2 things with this 45 billion dollars. One will make us all poor after the war. The other way will make us decently prosperous.

This way the 45 billion dollars will make us poor

If each of us should take his share of this 45 billion dollars (which averages approximately $330 per person) and hustle out to buy all he could with it—what would happen is what happens at an auction where every farmer there wants a horse that's up for sale.

If we tried to buy all we wanted, we would bid the prices of things up and up and up. Instead of paying $10 for a dress we're going to pay $15. Instead of $5 for a pair of shoes we're going to pay $8.

This bidding for scarce goods is going to raise prices faster than wages. Wages just won't keep up.

So what will people do?

U. S. workers will ask for more money. Since labor is scarce, a lot of them will get it. Then farmers and business men who

feel the pinch are going to ask more money for their goods.

And prices will go *still higher*. And the majority of us will be in that same old spot again—only worse.

This is what is known as Inflation.

Our government is doing a lot of things to keep prices down . . . rationing the scarcest goods, putting ceiling prices on things, stabilizing wages, increasing taxes.

But the government can't do the *whole job*. So let's see what *we* can do about it.

This way the 45 billion dollars will make us prosperous

If, instead of running out with our extra dough, and trying to bid on everything in sight, we buy only what we absolutely need, we will come out all right.

If, for instance, we put this money into (1) Taxes; (2) War Bonds; (3) Paying off old debts; (4) Life Insurance; and (5) The Bank, we don't bid up the prices of goods at all. And if besides doing this we (6) refuse to pay more than the ceiling prices; and (7) ask no more for what we have to sell—no more in wages, no more for goods—*prices stay where they are now.*

And we pile up a bank account. We have our family protected in case we die. We have War Bonds that'll make the down payment on a new house after the war, or help us retire some day. And we don't have taxes after the war that practically strangle us.

Maybe, doing this sounds as if it isn't fun. But being shot at up at the front isn't fun, either. You have a duty to those soldiers as well as to yourself. You *can't* let the money that's burning a hole in your pocket start setting the country on fire.

★ ★ ★

This advertisement, prepared by the War Advertising Council, is contributed by this Magazine in co-operation with the Magazine Publishers of America.

KEEP PRICES DOWN!

Use it up
Wear it out
Make it do
Or do without

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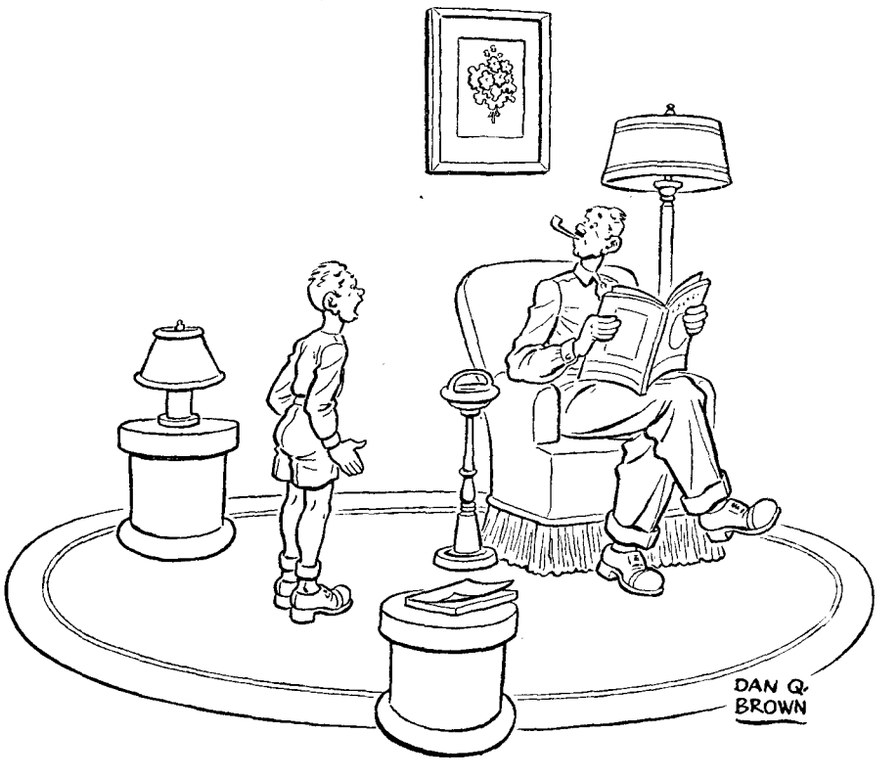

"Miss Pettibone told us we'd all grow up to be indispensable instruments in the great period of reconstruction—and here I've been counting on pitching for the Dodgers!"

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Perry, Henry Ten Eyck
Perry, Lawrence
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Poling, J. W.
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Pollard, Joseph Percival
Pool, David DeSola
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Poore, Charles G.
Pope, Arthur
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Poponoe, Paul
Popper, David H.
Porter, A. Kingsley
Porter, Kenneth
Porter, Sylvia F.
Porterfield, Allen W.
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Posselt, Erich
Post, Langdon W.
Potamkin, Harry Allen
Pottinger, David S.
Pottle, Frederick A.
Pound, Arthur
Pound, Louise
Pound, Mary Dryden
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Price, Lucy Jeanne
Price, Matlack
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Priestley, J. B.
Prince, Winifred Notman
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Proskauer, Joseph
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Puckette, Charles McD.
Puckett, Hugh W.
Puckett, Newbell Niles
Puleston, Capt. W. D.
Pulling, Edward
Pulsifer, Harold T.
Purdy, Charles McMorris
Purdy, D. McL.
Purdy, Theodore M., Jr.
Purnell, Idella
Putnam, Emily James
Putnam, George Haven
Putnam, George Palmer
Putnam, H. Phelps
Putnam, Patrick T. L.
Putnam, Samuel
Putt, S. Gorley
Pym, Mrs. Michael

Q

Queen, Ellery
Quackenbush, Mrs. Walter
Quick, Herbert
Quinn, Arthur H.

R

Racoa, Vittorio
Radoff, M. L.
Railey, Hilton H.
Ramsaye, Terry
Ransey, W. M.
Ranck, Carty
Rand, E. K.
Randall, Alec W. G.
Randall, John Herman, Jr.
Rankin, Daniel S.
Ransom, John Crowe
Rascoe, Burton
Ratcliffe, S. K.
Ratner, Joseph
Raude, Elliot A.
Ravage, M. E.
Rawlings, Marjorie Kinnan
Ray, Bronson S.
Read, Allen Walker
Read, Conyers
Read, Herbert
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Redmond, Cetherine
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Reed, W. Maxwell
Reekie, Gordon
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Reid, Edith Gittings
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Reid, Dorothy E.
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Reiss, Mrs. Malcolm
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Reniers, Percival
Reque, Anna C.
Reston, James
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Rice, Howard C.
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Rich, Louise
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Richmond, Mary B.
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Schaber, Will
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Schaffner, John
Schappes, Morris U.
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Scheel, Theodor
Scheinfeld, Amram
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(*Please turn to page 122*)

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THE CENTURY COMPANY (then in its 54th year) published Romain Rolland's *Mahatma Gandhi,* Herbert Adams Gibbons' *America's Place in the World,* Martin Johnson's *Camera Trails in Africa,* Harry A. Franck's *Vagabonding Through Changing Germany,* Lowell Thomas' *With Lawrence in Arabia,* V. M. Hillyer's *Child's History of the World,* Percy Marks' *The Plastic Age,* and fiction by such top writers as Donn Byrne and Johan Bojer.

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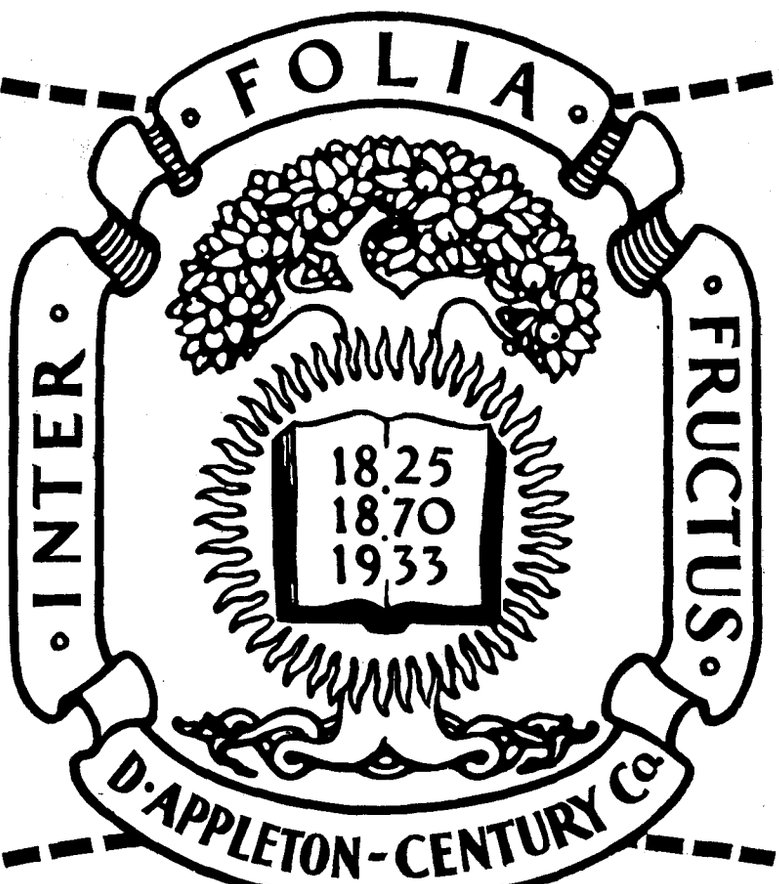

Looking Forward

to the APPLETON-CENTURY books soon to be published is a livening experience. Almost immediately will come *Invasion!* the complete now-it-can-be-told-story of the vast preparations and the invasion itself, the most complex military operation in history, all brilliantly presented by Charles Christian Wertenbaker, Chief Military Correspondent for *Time* and *Life.* This fall will see the publication of Niven Busch's fine novel about demobilized American soldiers, *They Dream of Home;* Helena Kuo's absorbing story of a courageous Chinese family, *Westward to Chungking;* and Betsey Barton's remarkable *And Now to Live Again,* an inspirational book that will bring help and strength to the disabled and sick at heart.

★

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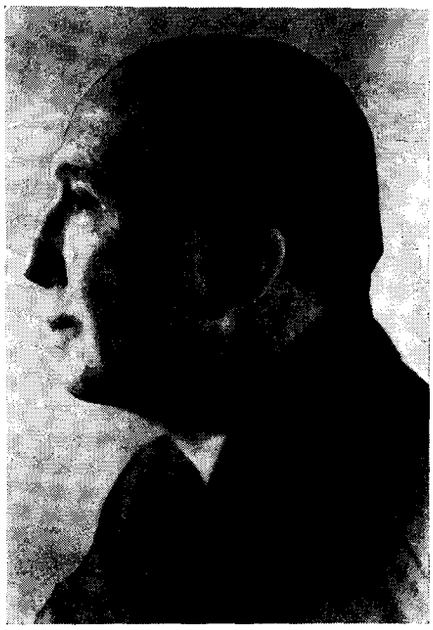
Poetry's Last Twenty Years

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT



William Rose Benét: "It has not been such a wasteland after all!"

TO tell the truth, I am rather terrified by this assignment. I have never pretended to be a scholar, so I cannot treat this subject in a scholarly way. As a "practising poet" I seem to fall between two faldstools, whence litanies arise to entirely different gods. Recently I took from my shelves the excellent "Victorian Poetry," edited by E. K. Brown of Cornell and published by Nelson in 1942. Here we begin with Tennyson and end with Gerard Hopkins and Housman. I found—not to my great surprise—that I still relished much of Tennyson, as I do of Browning. I rediscovered that writing that is clear and explicit is, to me, good writing. Browning and Meredith—both here—could be crabbèd enough in thought and expression. Sometimes, like Thomas Hardy, they wrote just very badly. But you could dig out the references and the allusions, and straighten out the knotted lines. They made sense when unknotted. But during the last twenty years, it seems to me, I have been struggling against a certain current of writing as one battles a torrent in a mist. There was the chatter "in little sharps and trebles," and even the full "sound and fury" (as of Hart Crane), and of it all I found that I understood but a small portion. The grappling with this poetry also included what Yeats has called "the fascination of what's difficult." I believe that critics like Paul Rosenfeld and Allen Tate are more qualified to appreciate that fascination than I; and so I really wish that either one of them were writing this article, in the modern manner. I most certainly wish that Archie MacLeish were writing it, who at first intended to, till more public duties overtook him.

What happened to poetry after the last war has been explained again and again. None has explained it better than C. Day Lewis when he spoke of the poets turning in upon themselves and talking "the private language of personal friends," because in the disillusionment following the war, and in the scene that T. S. Eliot has so well etched in "The Waste Land," they found—or felt they found—no audience. During that time there had undoubtedly been a great change in the world's attitude toward poetry. People still liked witty verse—witness the immediate success of Dorothy Parker—but they were not to be moved by the moralistic in poetry, and the sensuous had gone out of fashion. Taste was for the light and brittle, for the neat but not gaudy. Taste also swung toward the dryly intellectual and away from the robust filled with color. Or *did* public taste so swing? Was it not the newer poets who were so inclined, merely?

When we speak of the public's taste and the trend of thought in a time, and all that, we are apt to go very far wrong. Actually, there are not many people who really know much about the arts in any time. Actually, if you call "public taste" the taste of the majority of people, it is usually bad. Uneducated people cannot, as though through some visitation of God, suddenly distinguish good work from shoddy. An untrained mind will inevitably—unless possessed of a most unusual instinct—choose, of two works, the poorer. The populace not only wishes what it can understand, it wishes that to be in the simplest form possible, in the fashion which is easiest to assimilate. Hence the populace makes the fortune of moving picture producers who, for the most part, feed it dull drivel. As more of the populace become educated, more demand better pictures, and so get them. But I sometimes wonder whether it is worth while having any truck at all with what is commonly called "The Public Taste." If it is public, is it taste? This is not an "undemocratic" pronouncement; it is just common sense. Look about you!

I LIKE the human race, and in many ways I intensely admire human beings. But sometimes I think their taste most execrable. The "Public" the writer writes for is certainly not *that* public. So really, though they thought so, the change in objective on the part of the younger poets was not because they had lost a public—which no real poet ever really had. It was because the old ways bored them, the old manners of expression seemed theatrical or false, they wished again to get "at the root of the matter."

The most honest of them dug right down to the root of the matter, and, in some cases, pulled up everything else *by* the root. A phenomenon of our own country was a poet named Laura Riding, perhaps the most advanced of the pioneers of this new age. So severe was she with poetry as a medium of expression that she, to my mind, sought to remove from it all color or flavor whatsoever, and make it sheerly a matter of the higher metaphysics or the higher mathematics. It is quite possible that that may be the poetry of a future era; and that Miss Riding is many, many lustra ahead of her time; but I frankly confess that hers is poetry that I, as an average, educated person, neither understand nor draw much sustenance from, even after determined rereadings.

Nevertheless, it is easy for the merely superficial lover of what he or she calls poetry to dismiss our whole twenty years with contempt, as they frequently do. What was happening in poetry had been happening in all the arts. The period was one of transition and ferment. Just as the last world war broke, a flowering in poetry had taken place both in England and in the United States. The best exemplars in England were called "the Georgians," though their product was as various and as widely differentiated as are the poems of James Elroy Flecker (which I greatly admire) from those of Wilfred Owen (which I enormously respect). Perhaps Owen was not a Georgian, in the sense that poems of his were not put on broadsides decorated by Lovat Fraser. For, distinctly, they were not. They were doubtless written in the trenches where he died. Let us substitute, then, the sylvan Edward Thomas, who began to write poetry after friendship with our own Robert Frost. He wrote his poems on furloughs, and was killed in the battle of Arras. A fine and rare poet! Edmund Blunden, also associated with the countryside, survived the war. His first poems were written in 1914; but he continued, in the twenty years of which I am writing, to give us a deal of clear and understandable poetry

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John Day Books 1926-1944

For this occasion we list just one book out of each of our nineteen years of publishing. They are picked to show the kind of books we like and what our aims are, rather than as our nineteen "best books". Some of them made history, some fell below our hopes. Most of them are still in print.

1926	NEW SCHOOLS IN THE OLD WORLD. *The foundation of a list on modern education.*	CARLETON WASHBURNE
1927	THE BOOK OF THE GLOUCESTER FISHERMEN. *A lusty record of brave men, and it is still in demand.*	JAMES B. CONNOLLY
1928	GIANT KILLER. *A novel by a distinguished American, lately reprinted by the Readers Club.*	ELMER DAVIS
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1933	LOOKING FORWARD. *Published just after the President took office for his first term.*	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
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1935	MY COUNTRY AND MY PEOPLE. *The first of an unbroken string of six best-sellers.*	LIN YUTANG
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1942	INTRODUCING AUSTRALIA. *The standard work on its subject, accepted as such even in Australia.*	C. HARTLEY GRATTAN
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To pick out but one a year is invidious. It misses other fine books. We are reluctant not to list the sensitive novels of MARGARET MACKAY, the scholarly works of SIDNEY HOOK, such a famous book as *The Managerial Revolution* by JAMES BURNHAM, books by GANDHI and CHIANG KAI-SHEK, and especially such new 1944 books as *Martin Dies* by WILLIAM GELLERMANN and *China Looks Forward* by SUN FO. We shall gladly send a complete catalog on request.

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concerning the face of England, despite the whole trend away from this type.

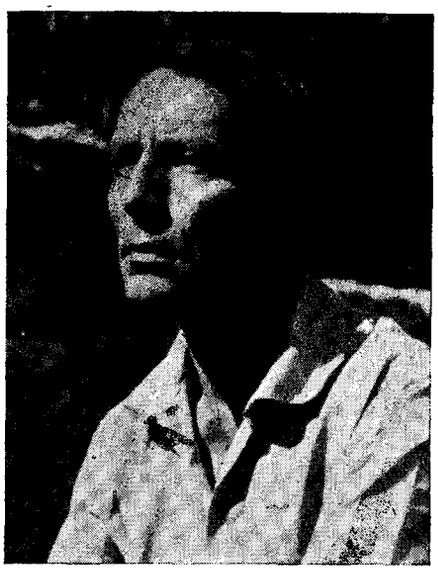
Of the true Georgians, Walter de la Mare was never swerved from his own kind of eerily illuminating verse, a particular type for which he only has the faculty in our time. John Masefield, King of the Georgians, having electrified us all by a return to robust verse-narrative before the war, was still to write his best, "Reynard the Fox," after the guns were still. Rupert Brooke died; Robert Graves, of the Welch Fusiliers in the war, graduated into less understandable verse and the historical novel; Georgians like Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, and the once much-awaited (for his "arrival") Lescelles Abercrombie wrote on, with ability but no new fire. It was an interim of men most of whom had already done their best work, continuing in the same strain, while vital new poets were simply not extant.

IN this country it was much the same. All the clamor concerning Free Verse and Imagism at the outset of the war, in which we took the field late, was no longer of any moment. Amy Lowell, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Landsay, Edgar Lee Masters were already established poets on library shelves. Edwin Arlington Robinson cultivated in solitary grandeur his own strict garden. Eliot alone, whose witty and skeptical "Prufrock" had preceded his "Wasteland," titillated the jaded appetite of critics. In my opinion some of his earlier poems still remain his best, despite the power he has since shown in poetic drama, notably, "Murder in the Cathedral." Mysticism ate him up, as it has done many a good man of verse.

The most productive "school" of poetry (and school it was in a real sense), proved to be in Tennessee. In such association have flowered talents as various as those of John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, Merrill Moore, Laura Riding, and others. Our poetic matador of pre-war "movements," Ezra Pound, after shrugging off the First World War as conflict for

> an old bitch gone in the teeth,
> for a botched civilization,

became a permanent exile and slowly but surely assassinated himself. We draw a veil. In the new time, an artist who made, perhaps, too much of typographical arrangements, but adroitly inserted himself into an era of atmosphere, was lower-case edward estlin cummings, destined to cause mighty thunders in the index and to *épâter les bourgeois* to his heart's content. What he could have been as pure lyrist (and he has written with great beauty at times) few will ever know. He remains distinctly black caviar to the general, whatever he may hold of the kernel. Wallace Stevens, of an earlier vintage, has continued an unabashed pursuit of pure esthetic, with a palette of vivid language, where Cummings also handles the actual palette of a painter. Marianne Craig Moore, originally published in England, but as American a person as she is abstruse as a poet, began to deliver her own dicta in verse entangled with infinite quotation (she practised that, I think,



Robinson Jeffers

long before Eliot) and to write her "Essay on Man and Other Strange Animals" in a style of unexpected rhyme that is an artichoke to the vulgar. If anybody wishes to be singular, I will always bet on an American to be more singular than anyone else; though the English can be singular enough in all conscience.

Some of the best of the era were women. Edna St. Vincent Millay had been a phenomenon before the First World War, and continued so. The poetry of Lola Ridge, who wrote "The Ghetto" in 1918, and gave us her most tremendous work, "Firehead," eleven years later, still grows in stature. Elinor Wylie excelled in magic, "a creature so clearly lunar" that we still marvel at that too brief, too brief, Landorian perfection of the word. Beside these we had Leonie Adams, Winifred Welles, Louise Bogan, Genevieve Taggard, all artists; and in narrative one can note Sara Bard Field's extraordinary "Barabbas."

I have not marshalled and drilled and assigned rank to these Pierian troops! I mention them as they occur to me. Our most disillusioned poet, of a love for bloody tragedy that goes back to the original Greek, has been Robinson Jeffers. The almost boyish vigor and optimism of the late Stephen Vincent Benét gave America a fundamental epic. Robert Frost continued to philosophize New England. Carl Sandburg grew taller and taller in the Middle West . . .

There have been many others, both here and abroad. Edwin Arlington Robinson wrote "Tristram." Archibald MacLeish marked down his own style in "Conquistador," a superb narrative that appeared in 1932, and led the way for our poetry into the medium of radio, where young Norman Rosten achieved. Harold Hart Crane's perverse and tortured genius labored to build his "Bridge" in 1930, producing some of the most sonorous lines since Marlowe, fortunate phrase like a shower of uncut jewels, and a disorganized body of work that persists for me only as something magnificently deranged.

It has not been such a wasteland, after all! It has been less a wasteland here than in England—where finally, however, the trio of Wystan Hugh Auden, Stephen Spender, and Cecil Day-Lewis proclaimed a new birth for Gerard Manley Hopkins and proceeded, with the other Irish poet, Louis MacNeice (Day-Lewis is actually Irish) to lead English verse into a new promised land. At one time this land looked to be the land of revolution; but an actual world revolution, fomented by the Fascists and Nazis in bleeding Spain, burst upon us in full fury. Hitler, they say, had begun as an artist of sorts. He paid no heed to the poets; but, brooding on Wagner, precipitated us all into his own hectic version of Götterdämmerung, his bloody and yet pinchbeck twilight of all the murderous gods of the Hun. It cannot be said that the poets were prophets; but then, long since, the prophet's mantle had been removed from them. Prime ministers, world aviators, revered and noble senators were no prophets either! The Republican Party in the United States came within an ace by its votes in Congress of dispersing our hastily organized army! And everyone knows that poets are far sillier than politicians or businessmen!

Strangely enough, I can here and now return comfortably to my Victorian poets. For, though Gerard Manley Hopkins was born in 1844, and died in Dublin (when this chronicler was three years old) in 1887, where he had been Professor of Greek at the Royal University—he attained the like of what A. E. Housman, fourteen years younger, achieved in his own time. He has been the oriflamme of the newer English poets. This priest-poet, dedicated to the Roman Catholic communion, laid his chief influence upon English poetry during the last twenty years. This might have been conditioned by the fact that the then poet laureate of England, Robert Bridges, to whom

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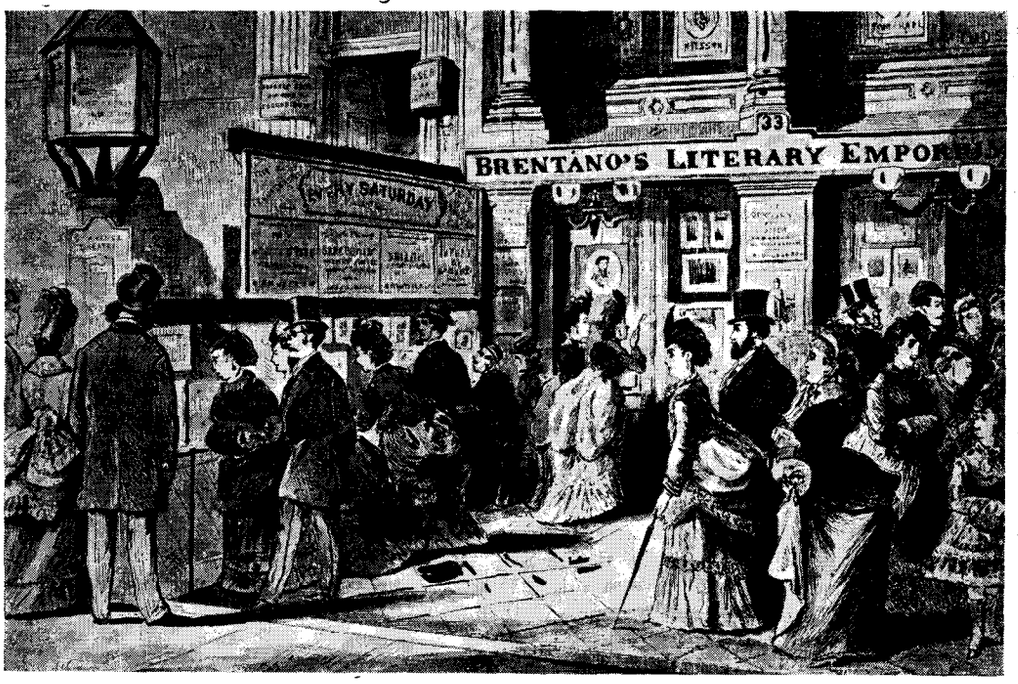

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his friend had entrusted his poems, had felt that this "difficult lonely music" would not readily find an audience, and did not edit the work for publication until 1918. A. E. Housman, also a great Greek scholar, had, of course, published his first book, "A Shropshire Lad," in 1896. But young folk were still quoting it by heart, and with ecstasy, in the years just after the First World War; and when, after a huge interval, Housman's "Last Poems" appeared in 1922, they started ripples of encomium and critical appraisal that did not die away for twenty years, only to be renewed when, after the poet's death in 1936, his brother Lawrence gathered together "More Poems."

In each case the poet was a recluse and a scholar, a man of celibate and dedicated existence, and of carefully culled output, though their styles were as unlike as chalk and cheese, and Housman would probably have violently repudiated Hopkins's theory and practice of "sprung rhythm"; being a classicist of classicists. Yet, so like in many features, these two have exercised the greatest influence on poets in our time outside of still another—so opposite!—the "Moby Dick" of our own native poetry, Walt Whitman.

In 1928 a book called "Human Shows, Far Phantasies," and a posthumous one, "Winter Words," reminded us that, twenty years before, the last of the great Victorian poets, Thomas Hardy, had completed that extraordinary verse epic, "The Dynasts." He wrote on into our last twenty years, and the younger poets went back to him as to one of the few of the old masters in whom they trusted. This was partly because Hardy's strong vein of pessimism was the vogue, partly because he had followed his poetry as he chose and where he found it, eschewing any claim to popularity. But above them all, for influence on younger poets, remained without question, the greatest poet of Ireland, William Butler Yeats.

Awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923, at the verge of the twenty years we are discussing, Yeats wrote and published enough later work within that period to be constantly a model and a spur for the younger writers. He was alive then too, and walked among them. To me, some of his finest work is in the "Responsibilities" of 1914; but, unlike many older poets, he lived to grow, and continued growing like a tree of many branches wherein one perceived strange stars. No man ever lived who was more entirely a man of the arts; in which, indeed, might have been included conjuration, for I think he would have cherished being known as an actual wizard! He carried, as in a sacred vessel—as in the luminous and napkined grail itself—the holy spirit of poetry, which the materialism of our time has done so much to degrade; and which now, through the fiery furnace of war, we are again perceiving to be a vital necessity.

So, it seems, I come to an end of this most random audit. In general, it would appear to me that, out of all the inevitable experimentation of our time, we have opened some new springs, struck the water of life here and there from the rock. Among certain of the younger poets in America today—it would be invidious to name them—and, in time of war, necessarily they are chiefly women—there is vitality and large enterprise. If genuine talents like those of Karl Shapiro and Harry Brown—both in the service—survive the conflict (and others like them), we shall have a new birth of American poetry. Horrible as is the convulsion of nature of this war, and iron as must be our grip upon the beast once we have it down, the cataclysm has shocked the artist into a new sense of reality. Or I think it will prove so.

Art is not something apart from life. It is of the essence. We are witnessing—or hearing its reverberations from afar—an apocalypse. Under our feet our world is changed. I can hardly prophesy, and I may be misguided, but I believe that out of this war—as out of the last came an almost intolerable burden of disillusionment—will rise such stern determination and such stubborn zeal for what our world must be, that we shall have poetry (beyond the poetry of anguish and reaction and blackness) whose eyes have seen the glory. Not the glory of war—God defend us!—the glory of life on this blood-soaked planet, where men can become a great deal more than men, whenever they will.

The Wakeful Night

By William Rose Benét

WHAT avail they—the vows that you swear?
You have the same men:
The fearful in wrath, the opposed, the oppressors are there.
They will oppose again.
Will they balk again, in the hour of decision,
The people's voice and the people's vision?
Will they shrink the hope of the world to the ink of a scratching pen?

What avail they—the battles you win,
Who are of the Old Mind,
Emotional wastes you wander in—
With all paths blind
Save—*O good, good, excellent past all measure!*—
The path that leads to your greed and your treasure.
God, what came ye out for to see—what went ye forth to find?

What avail they—the plans you plan,
Who scheme the old scheme,
(Not ever for the good of Man)
Who dream the old dream
Of power and plunder, plunder and power,
With your fear, and your wonder (in an idle hour)
At the arid desert the God-in-Man can make your kingdom seem?

The sacrifice in Bozrah, shall it be
The same in the end—
That the cormorant and owl and bittern be
That last confusion's friend?
That ye call on the noble of heart—and none shall be—
But the satyr shall cry to his fellow by the felled tree,
And nettle and bramble clamber the ruined wall,
And the dragon pasture, the vulture settle, on all—
Where vainly we dreamed that the tongue of the dumb might sing,
And the wilderness silver with the waterspring,
And an highway be builded straight for blundering men
To fare on like fools redeemed, to fall not again,
And the sorrow and the sighing to flee away—
(Hark to the clamor against the people's day
Rising—how privilege quakes for its overthrow!)

What of the vows you swear, the battles you win, the plans you essay,
If the core of reason and truth, to shine like a lamp on the way,
Be the first to go?

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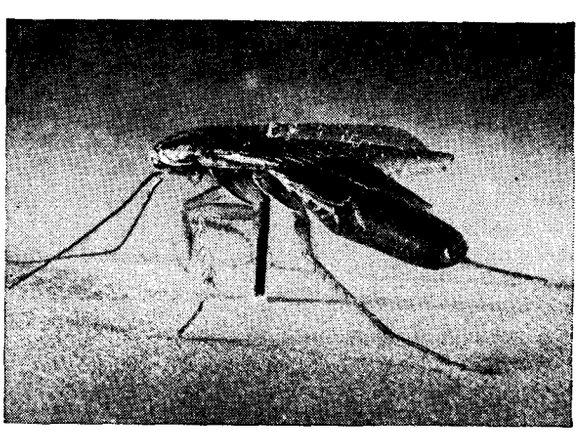
Notable Literature Born of Good Reporting

John Hersey's eye-witness report of Guadalcanal appeared first in LIFE, then in book form as the famed "Into the Valley." His current work is the heralded "A Bell for Adano." Both books have held high tenure on best-seller lists. Both are designated "imperative reading" by *The Council on Books in Wartime.* Other books by other members of LIFE's staff—such as Roger Butterfield, Jack Belden, and Walter Graebner—have received comparable acclaim. And their recognition clearly indicates the prevailingly high literary quality of LIFE's editorial content, the notable ability of its writers.

Charles Beard's recent book, "The Republic," appeared in condensed form in ten issues of LIFE. This discussed our American form of government—how it came to be and how it works. The subject is complex and profound, yet Mr. Beard's style was so warm and human, his opinions so contemporary and challenging, that a large segment of LIFE's 22,000,000 readers found themselves absorbed. The series prompted some of the most notable mail LIFE has ever received—it focused attention once more on the literary success LIFE so often achieves when it presents factual commentary and good reporting.

H. Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion World map showed LIFE's readers the whole world—accurately and all at once—for the first time in their lives. It gave them a quite different understanding of the universe than they had ever been able to get from any other device, pictorial or verbal, and readers were amazed and admiring. Letters and comments came from teachers and students, explorers, and everyday citizens, congratulating LIFE on the educational power of the Dymaxion globe and recalling the similar value of other LIFE maps and models created by Richard Harrison and Norman Bel Geddes.



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The Narrative Poetry of Stephen Vincent Benét

CHRISTOPHER LaFARGE

EDITOR'S NOTE: *No anniversary commemorative issue of* The Saturday Review *would be complete without special tribute to Stephen Vincent Benét, not only for his conspicuous part in the development of this magazine, but for his lasting contributions to American literature during the period marked out for discussion in this special number.*

IT is obviously impossible to assess the weight and place of the narrative poetry of Stephen Benét at this point. It is too soon after his death and the job, when it is finally done, will be the end-product of many opinions over many years. Beyond that, I am not at all sure that I am not still too moved by his death to be capable now of a detached and valuable commentary on his work. It is difficult enough during life to separate one's admiration of artist and man from one's love for a friend.

What I have in mind, rather, is to suggest that Benét made a great, an enduring, and a most timely contribution to the progress of poetical writing in his day. Even as a friend and contemporary, I feel quite secure in saying that. Whatever final place his narrative verse may find in the hierarchy of English poetry, the fact that he has been a contributor to the forward movement and progress of our poetry is within the practicable judgment of his own time.

Now, granting that it is better to postpone the task of analyzing his narrative verse until some later day, when critical judgment may be more nearly divorced from emotional prejudice, it will still be valuable (and will point quite clearly to the contribution I mentioned above) to lay out, as it were, a skeleton scheme for the approach to the subject. Let us see what this would involve.

There would be the technical aspects of his narrative verse, with particular emphasis on those major works of his, "John Brown's Body" and "Western Star." These technical aspects would include the use of verse forms, their skilful and sensitive variation to reinforce mood as well as to recreate most readily a mood that was previously set. There would be his informed choice of metrical variants as well as his invention of his own forms, their aptness, their degree of success in various uses.

There would be (still in this connection of technique) the use of the lyric poem as part of the narrative poem, both as a chapter heading and chapter footnote, and as a catalyst that gave vitality and extra meaning to narrative passages before it and after it. There would be the consideration of those prose poems, or passages of poetic prose if you choose, with which the inevitable conjunctions of the story were accomplished most economically, avoiding the deadly pitfall of the poem that has no reason per se to be a poem beyond its arbitrary and necessary presence in a work that was cast in poetry. And when we had covered all that immense field of his technical accomplishment—and I am one who believes that without a mastery of technique and an assimilation of technique, the poet is hamstrung—we should have to note that we were in the presence now of a remarkable innovation calculated justly and exactly to bring his narrative poetry into key with the swift tempo of his own day and yet reflect equally his historical subject matter. Yet we should still find ahead of us the fascination of the study of his variations of rhythm within metrical forms—

—Drawing by Albert Sterner

Christopher LaFarge: "It took a book like 'John Brown's Body' to restore poetry to the grand manner."

that rhythmical variation which marks off the grand from the petty poet as clearly as any other single characteristic.

When we had finished with the examination of a technique which, by the way, never for one moment intrudes itself or overbalances the matter it contains and exhibits, we should have to move on to the question of characterization. We should have to note that stories told in poetry are never for one single moment relieved of the responsibility laid on the story in prose: that the characters of the story must live, must be in the round, must—as the excellent phrase has it—come off the page.

Here we should find ourselves comparing his success in the creation of the imaginary with his success in the recreation, the revitalization of the historical character. Lee and Lincoln and Captain John Smith: how is it, by what skill, what understanding, that they are so live and so real—despite the crucifying flatness of their legendary characters as pinned down in the school books? How is it that they are as live and as real as Wingate, or Melora, or Cudjo, or Dickon Heron, whose lives were free to be directed according to the pattern of their creator? Is it because he kept always a warm understanding of the human being as opposed to the public figure, or because he retained that greater humor which sees all tragedy and all triumph in the just perspective of man's fallibility?

THEN, when we had finished for the moment with poetic technique and human characterization, we should have to explain the reason for the two books. All the books in the world that have lasted have had a reason for being. That is to say, they have had a reason beyond the simple desire for self-expression. Sometimes the reason is as simple to see (and as hard to comprehend) as that which informed Boswell when he wrote of Johnson. Sometimes it is more complex, being as hard to seize, for instance, as that which moved William Blake. Here we should find much to study: Benét's love of his country, the justice of his love, the desire to make clear the streams muddied by miscomprehension and false pride, and the passion to infuse into others the same passion of intelligent and intelligible admiration. And above all, we should discover that astonishing balance which sees that man is but half man who has not put down his roots deep into his own soil, yet is poisoned if all that he withdraws for nourishment is a blind adherence to that source.

But when we had studied all these

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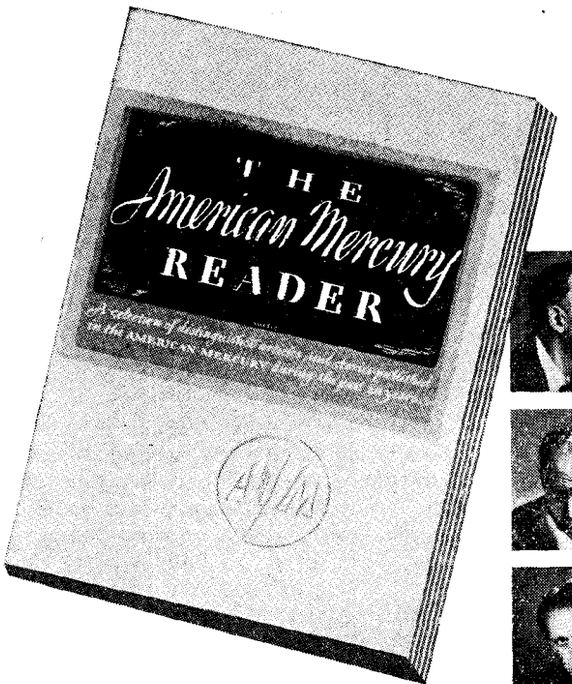

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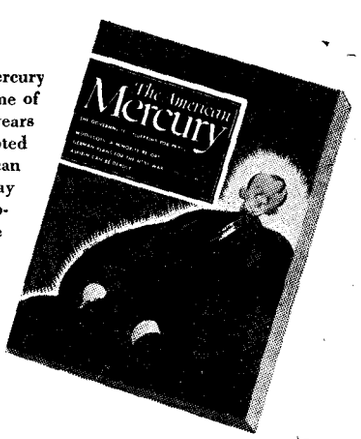

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things, and fruitfully for ourselves—for it is always good to try to understand the large view when we are lucky enough to find it—then we should suddenly realize that we had discovered the most important contribution that Stephen Benét made to American literature and, indeed, to American life. We should find that the difficult techniques, the complex patterns of rhythm and of metre and of form, the characterizations that were born of understanding and humor, that never grew stale nor stereotyped, the reasons for the parts as for the whole that revealed a patriotism which could safely marry with an art because both were purely bred—that *all* these matters were comprehensible to us and in a degree uncommon in most writers, and particularly in most modern writers. And it is then that we should see that always, without exception, we had found in him that rare quality of clarity.

Clarity: a word that has fallen often into disfavor. And yet it is the absence of clarity that has worked, in our time, to drive poetry from the scale of the mural painting down to the size of the miniature on ivory. Or, to use the analogy in another way, made art incomprehensible until it had descended to the level of the advertisement. It would be ridiculous to say that Benét accomplished such a transformation single-handed; too many names list in that effort. But it took a book like "John Brown's Body" to restore poetry to the grand manner, and the grand manner can exist only where many people may profit by it when they see it. There is no such thing now as the grand manner for what one always calls "the few." Grandness is not exclusive: it is inclusive.

We have suffered for years from the obfuscation of poetry by those who wrote poetry that could be comprehensible only to themselves or to those few persons who had the key to their code-language, or to those who were prepared to plow through exegetical treatises for an explanation—for it is a strange fact that so much exegesis should need to be written nowadays of a poetry (or indeed a prose) whose authors are still alive. Little by little, because of this sort of obscure and difficult writing, the public which had supported poetry dropped off. Not because there was no beauty of form, no beauty of sound, no beauty or no excitement of phrasing and imagery—but because what these forms, these images, these symbols, these phrases had to say, was utterly obscure to the generality of readers; because, in short, the authors of the poetry were unwilling (or unable, perhaps) to subject themselves, and their overbearing or unassimilated educations, to that terrible discipline without which clarity is never achieved.

Stephen Vincent Benét

FOR, to achieve clarity within the framework and within the high purpose of poetry requires of the writer two separate disciplines. The first discipline is that which forces him to reconsider each conception within his mind until he himself knows precisely why and how he wishes to write of it. Those who have so written will tell you that this is the hardest part of the whole process. There can be no resting at a halfway point. There is no clarity halfway on. When the mind stumbles over, or avoids, or pushes aside, the answer to *why* and to *how*, the result will reflect that hesitation or default, and there issues no clarity, but only reflected confusion.

The second discipline is in the act of writing and, one can add, in not writing. That is, what is written must fit into the pattern of the clarity of the thought that conceived it, and those parts which appear, inevitably, as by-products of a clear purpose, must be examined closely and with a detachment in itself a discipline, and then be written only if they conform, or be rejected, even after writing, if they do not conform. By which you will see that clarity of execution, like clarity of conception, is a compound of honesty and of courage. Honesty, because it is cheaper, less wearing, to cruise ahead without those disciplines, trusting to that abused word, inspiration; courage, because not every man is willing to state his thesis so clearly that none can misunderstand him, for by a partial use of confusion or obscurity, he leaves himself a graceful exit from what may prove in time to be the predicament of erroneous conviction.

No one of our day who has read the narrative verse of Stephen Benét can fail to be moved by it. By so much is poetry to be judged, by so much is it capable of taking its place with the enduring works of art. But equally, no reader—granted a minimum of common intelligence and fundamental education—can misunderstand what he reads, whether he agrees with it or not. The stories point their endings at their beginnings, and the endings conclude, in clarity, what the beginnings foreshadowed, what the whole central substance made actual and real. It is a contribution so rare—and to my mind so great—that one can find few parallels to it. I shall not try to here, though that would be a proper part of the final examination of his work. It suffices for me now that the narrative poetry of Stephen Benét, by its technical excellence, its honesty and courage of purpose, its understanding characterization, could achieve clarity beyond cavil, and being clear—as good jewels are clear—yet move and shake the spirits of its many readers. It is possible that it will so move and shake them when we who are his present readers are long dead, and that these poems will still be as new and as fresh then as truth that is seen clearly again and again, for truth is not often seen and stated in clarity.

Fraser Young's Literary Crypt: No. 59

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. The solution to Crypt No. 59 will be found in the next issue.

LFDF EQDWHNWXOAGA JWFDT
O X G S X A O P Q B F X U D S
KRKWHNWXQ.

—MSXXSGG KSZP.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 58

IF YOU PICK UP A STARVING DOG AND MAKE HIM PROSPEROUS, HE WILL NOT BITE YOU. THIS IS THE PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DOG AND A MAN.

—PUDD'NHEAD WILSON'S CALENDAR.—MARK TWAIN.

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Invocation

BY STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

EDITOR'S NOTE: *It was the privilege of* The Saturday Review *to publish many of the early poems of Stephen Vincent Benét. Especially do we consider it a privilege to have been able to publish on June* 11, 1927, *the following poem which later became part of the now famous "John Brown's Body."*

AMERICAN muse, whose strong and diverse heart
So many men have tried to understand
But only made it smaller with their art,
Because you are as various as your land,

As mountainous-deep, as flowered with blue rivers,
Thirsty with deserts, buried under snows,
As native as the shape of Navajo quivers,
And native, too, as the sea-voyaged rose.

Swift runner, never captured or subdued,
Seven-branched elk beside the mountain stream,
That half a hundred hunters have pursued
But never matched their bullets with the dream,

Where the great huntsmen failed, I set my sorry
And mortal snare for your immortal quarry.

You are the buffalo-ghost, the broncho-ghost
With dollar-silver in your saddle-horn,
The cowboys riding in from Painted Post,
The Indian arrow in the Indian corn,

And you are the clipped velvet of the lawns
Where Shropshire grows from Massachusetts sods,
The grey Maine rocks—and the war-painted dawns
That break above the Garden of the Gods.

The prairie-schooners crawling toward the ore
And the cheap car, parked by the station-door.

Where the skyscrapers lift their foggy plumes
Of stranded smoke out of a stony mouth
You are that high stone and its arrogant fumes,
And you are ruined gardens in the South

And bleak New England farms, so winter-white
Even their roofs look lonely, and the deep
The middle grainland where the wind of night
Is like all blind earth sighing in her sleep.

A friend, an enemy, a sacred hag
With two tied oceans in her medicine-bag.

They tried to fit you with an English song
And clip your speech into the English tale.
But, even from the first, the words went wrong,
The catbird pecked away the nightingale.

The homesick men begot high-cheekboned things
Whose wit was whittled with a different sound
And Thames and all the rivers of the kings
Ran into Mississippi and were drowned.

They planted England with a stubborn trust.
But the cleft dust was never English dust.

Stepchild of every exile from content
And all the disavouched, hard-bitten pack
Shipped overseas to steal a continent
With neither shirts nor honor to their back.

Pimping grandee and rump-faced regicide,
Apple-cheeked younkers from a windmill-square,
Puritans stubborn as the nails of Pride,
Rakes from Versailles and thieves from County Clare,

The black-robed priests who broke their hearts in vain
To make you Guard in France or Guard in Spain.

These were your lovers in your buckskin-youth.
And each one married with a dream so proud
He never knew it could not be the truth
And that he coupled with a girl of cloud.

And now to see you is more difficult yet
Except as an immensity of wheel
Made of wheels, oiled with inhuman sweat
And glittering with the heat of ladled steel.

All these you are, and each is partly you,
And none is false, and none is wholly true.

So how to see you as you really are,
So how to suck the pure, distillate, stored
Essence of essence from the hidden star
And make it pierce like a riposting sword.

For, as we hunt you down, you must escape
And we pursue a shadow of our own
That can be caught the magician's cape
But has the flatness of a painted stone.

Never the running stag, the gull at wing,
The pure elixir the American thing.

And yet, at moments when the mind was hot
With something fierier than joy or grief,
When each known spot was an eternal spot
And every leaf was an immortal leaf,

I think that I have seen you, not as one,
But clad in diverse semblances and powers,
Always the same, as light falls from the sun,
And always different, as the differing hours.

Yet, through each altered garment that you wore,
The naked body, shaking the heart's core.

All the day the snow fell on that Eastern town
With its soft, pelting, little, endless sigh
Of infinite flakes that brought the tall sky down
Till I could put my hands in the white sky

And taste cold scraps of heaven on my tongue
And walk in such a changed and luminous light
As gods inhabit when the gods are young.
All day it fell. And when the gathered night

Was a blue shadow cast by a pale glow
I saw you then, snow image, bird of the snow.

And I have seen and heard you in the dry
Close huddled furnace of the city street
When the parched moon was planted in the sky
And the limp air hung dead against the heat.

I saw you rise, red as that rusty plant,
Dizzied with lights, half mad with senseless sound,
Enormous mettle, shaping to the chant
Of a triphammer striking iron ground.

Enormous power, ugly to the fool
And beautiful as a well handled tool.

These, as a memory of that windy day
On the bare hills, beyond the last barbed wire,
When all the orange poppies bloomed one way
As if a breath would blow them into fire,

I keep forever, like the sea-lion's tusk
The broken sailor brings away to land
But when he touches it, he smells the musk,
And the whole sea lies hollow in his hand.

So, from a hundred visions, I make one,
And out of darkness build my mocking sun.

And should that task seem fruitless in the eyes
Of those a different magic sets apart
To see through ice crystal of the wise
No nations but the nation that is Art,

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Their words are just. But when the
birchbark-call
Is shaken with the sound that hunters
make
The moose comes plunging through
the forest wall
Although the rifle waits beside the
lake.

Art has no nation—but the mortal sky
Lingers like gold in immortality.

This flesh this seeded from no foreign
grain
But Pennsylvania and Kentucky wheat,
And it has soaked in California rain
And five years tempered in New Eng-
land's sleet

To strive at last, against an alien
proof
And by the changes of an alien moon,
To build again that blue, American
roof
Over a half-forgotten battle-tune,

And call unsurely, from a haunted
ground,
Armies of shadows, and the shadow-
sound.

In your Long House there is an attic-
place
Full of dead epics and machines that
rust
And there, occasionally, with casual
face,
You come awhile to stir the sleepy
dust,

Neither in pride nor mercy, but in vast
Indifference at so many gifts unsought,
The yellowed satins, smelling of the
past,
And all the loot the lucky pirates
brought.

I only bring a cup of silver air.
Yet, in your casualness, receive it
there.

Receive the dream too haughty for
the breast,
Receive the words that should have
walked as bold
As the storm walks along the moun-
tain-crest
And are like beggars whining in the
cold.

The maimed presumption, the unskil-
ful skill,
The patchwork colors, fading from the
first,
And all the fire that fretted at the
will
With such a barren ecstasy of thirst.

Receive them all—and should you
choose to touch them
With one slant ray of quick, American
light
Even the dust will have no power to
smutch them,
Even the worst will glitter in the
night.

If not—the dry bones littered by the
way
May still point giants toward their
golden prey.

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—TED ROBINSON, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

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What the Public Wanted

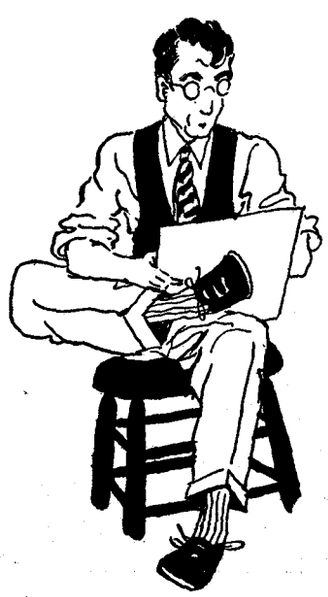
HARRISON SMITH

ANYONE who has watched American publishing for the last twenty years can find an answer to many questions he may have asked himself about the literary habits of America by consulting the list of best-selling novels and books of non-fiction over the last twenty years which follows this article. It is doubtful, however, if any two people will come to the same conclusion, since in an intellectual parlor game of this sort you are apt to find the answers that suit your own temperament and inclinations. The broadest and most important question involved, of course, is the extent to which the wide popularity of books is a guide to their actual merit as literature. The record of one year may seem to give the right answers, only to have them denied by the next two years.

Of the twenty books listed for 1924, perhaps only three would meet with immediate recognition from today's generation of younger readers: Simon and Schuster's "Crossword Puzzle Books," Fanny Farmer's "Boston Cooking School Book," and Emily Post's "Etiquette." The most distinguished non-fiction books of that year, aside from Bernard Shaw's "Saint Joan," were "The Americanization of Edward Bok," Mark Twain's "Autobiography," and Papini's "Life of Christ," and you can ask yourself how many of them are read today. That was a good year for unadulterated romance, pure in heart and untroubled by reality, for Raphael Sabatini, James Oliver Curwood, and Zane Grey, authors of Class B heart throbs, are there in force. Another favorite tear-jerker of the time, Gene Stratton Porter, shows up in the next year with her enormously successful "Keeper of the Bees," today an incomprehensibly dull and wooden novel. Not one of these best-sellers of two decades ago shows that the public had any interest in the problems of the day, or was concerned with the future, or with the First World War. The most important novel was Edna Ferber's "So Big," though you might prefer Anne Douglas Sedgwick's "The Little French Girl," or Dorothy Canfield's "The Homemaker." Self improvement, entertainment, and self-encouragement were behind the sale of several millions of these books—and perfectly sound motives, too, one might add.

The year 1925 brought Sinclair Lewis's "Arrowsmith," which held a qualitative four-year supremacy with the publication of Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front." Non-fiction was generally undistinguished from 1924 to 1927 when, in a single year, Will Durant's "The Story of Philosophy," collected from a series that had been running in the Little Blue Book, Emil Ludwig's "Napoleon," T. E. Lawrence's "Revolt in the Desert," "Trader Horn," Lindbergh's "We," Halliburton's "The Royal Road to Romance," and Katherine Mayo's "Mother India" made record sales for publishers and booksellers; four of these titles were best-sellers through the following year. Non-fiction had to wait fifteen years to approach this record, though there were still no books listed of timely interest, except in its dubious manner, "Mother India," in which the spinster author horrified what was left of puritanical sensibilities in America and England, and, of course, our national hero's report of his single-handed flight to Paris.

During the first five years of *The Saturday Review's* life new novelists became best-sellers, some of whom stayed in the running with book after book; others soon withered on the vine, like Michael Arlen, the Mayfair Armenian, and his "The Green Hat," or Margaret Kennedy's "The Constant Nymph," or Warrick Deeping with two "Sorels" in one year, or Percival Wren's "Beau Geste," or Mazo de la Roche's "Jalna" and its successors. And there were the ubiquitous Louis Bromfield, who had suffered a sea change since "The Green Bay Tree," Thornton Wilder's "Bridge," and Edna Ferber's "Showboat" and "Cimarron," and S. S. Van Dine's "The Greene Murder Case," the only murder-mystery writer listed in all the twenty years.



The year of the black depression, 1929, was distinguished by Stephen Benét's "John Brown's Body," Sinclair Lewis's "Dodsworth," and the first significant novels, aside from John Dos Passos's earlier "Three Soldiers," to emerge from the World War—"All Quiet on the Western Front," Arnold Zweig's "The Case of Sergeant Grischa," and Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms." In that year, William B. Seabrook's name appeared for the first time, starting the cult for voodoo and all the nonsense that went with it, while Strachey's "Elizabeth and Essex" and Abbé Dimnet's "The Art of Thinking" were strange companions of Joan Lowell's synthetic "Cradle of the Deep," or Ripley's "Believe It or Not."

NEXT year gave us H. G. Wells's "The Outline of History" and Charles and Mary Beard's "The Rise of American Civilization." That was the year in which the American people preferred Axel Munthe's delightful and erudite "The Story of San Michele" to any other non-fiction book, and in which it showed no interest apparent here in its stomach or in games. In 1930, we appeared to be growing up, though 1931 listed two books on bridge and an apparently humorous affair called "Boners."

The year 1933 deserved a red star for the first of the five-mile, half-million word and million-sale novels to appear in one volume, Hervey Allen's "Anthony Adverse," and no one has yet computed the number of man and woman hours wasted by Americans on that now almost-forgotten epic. In the previous year we had thought Pearl Buck's "The Good Earth" a sizable book, and so it was in another sense, for it was the first thoughtful glance that an American novelist had given to the Orient. With its followers it has undoubtedly forced America to understand the sufferings of China and her long war with Japan, and so, beyond all but a few books, over these two decades it has been of historic importance.

By 1935, the middle-aged readers were beginning to understand that while on the one hand "Life Begins at Forty" they had been "The Hundred Million Guinea Pigs" of the scientific advertisers and had, perhaps, to be grateful to be alive at all. James Hilton, Alexander Woollcott, and Lloyd C. Douglas had started their adventurous careers as successful writers. Mr. Douglas had become the first novelist to make religion pay for many

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a year, though it might be expected that a public more and more bewildered and distressed by increasing world chaos might find a popular writer who would give them consolation and hope.

This was the year in which "Of Time and the River" introduced a deeply significant new writer, Thomas Wolfe, to mass readers, and the fact that it was possible for a novel so difficult in many ways to become a best seller without being a book club selection was a sign that the fiction-reading public was willing to accept the judgment of the critics who from the first had recognized this writer's genius. Sinclair Lewis's "It Can't Happen Here," warning America of the danger of native fascism, was one of the early novels to reflect the growing fears induced by the rise of Hitler in Germany, the forerunner of a school of literature warning us of approaching war.

Margaret Mitchell and George Santayana led the fiction list of 1936, a somewhat incredible combination of historical romance and philosophy; and which of the two writers was more astonished by what happened to them, it would be difficult to say. Mr. Santayana will probably never write another novel, and Miss Mitchell has been so overwhelmed by the enormous and deserved popularity of "Gone With the Wind" that she has kept her talents under cover ever since. John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men" in 1939 revealed the dramatic talent of a man the critics had marked for several years, the full measure of whose creative gift would be revealed in "The Grapes of Wrath" two years later, a novel that blazed with indignation at injustice and cruelty in our own country. Another writer to win permanent recognition in the first year of the Second World War was John P. Marquand. His "Wickford Point" was the first of three novels he has written to date which have made him, though he sees life through New England eyes, the most important observer of the American social scene.

By this time American journalists and correspondents had already revealed their ability and knowledge of the world and the war. John Gunther exposed the insides of lands as far apart as Germany, Asia, and Latin America. William L. Shirer's "Berlin Diary" in 1941 topped a list of five non-fiction books about the war which included Douglas Miller's "You Can't Do Business with Hitler" and Winston Churchill's "Blood, Sweat, and Tears," though the year before there had been only one. In 1942, seven of the ten non-fiction books listed dealt with the war and international politics, led by "See Here, Private Har-

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LET THE HURRICANE ROAR
Rose Wilder Lane
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WHITHER MANKIND
Edited by Charles A. Beard
★
THE HUMAN SITUATION
W. Macneile Dixon
★
I MUST HAVE LIBERTY
Isabel de Palencia
★
ESSAYS ON FAITH AND MORALS
(new edition of THE WILL TO BELIEVE)
William James
★
ROGET'S THESAURUS
New Edition
★
THE THEATRE
Sheldon Cheney
★
SATURDAY'S CHILDREN
ELIZABETH THE QUEEN
Maxwell Anderson
★
A NEWMAN TREASURY
Charles F. Harrold
★
STONEWALL JACKSON
George Francis Robert Henderson
★
THE LIVING THOUGHTS LIBRARY
★
DARK CIRCLE OF BRANCHES
WATERLESS MOUNTAIN
Laura Adams Armer
★
LUST FOR LIFE
Irving Stone
★
LIFE OF JESUS
François Mauriac
★
THIS LIFE I HAVE LOVED
Isobel Field
★
ENGLISH SOCIAL HISTORY
A SHORTENED HISTORY OF ENGLAND
George Macaulay Trevelyan
★
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grove"; last year there were eight. The enormous sales of these books can be attributed in part to their brilliance and to the fact that censorship of the press and of magazines, either actual or self-induced, had turned over to the book publishers the task of informing the American people of the truth about the war and of interpreting what was going on throughout the world. It has been through books that we have often found out the truth about what has puzzled us, and have been able to satisfy our enormous curiosity as to what was to come. These twenty years between the end of one war and midway into the next have brought millions of new readers to literature and have given us new writers whose reputation will go on through the years; they have proved also that the best writers we have can appear in the lists of those who received the highest award for their work.

That there has been a steady improvement in the literary taste of the reading public since 1924 seems to be obvious, or is it simply that better books are being written? Certainly historical novels, the most consistently popular form of fiction, are hammered out with more insight into human nature; there are fewer hell-roaring heroes who tremble at the sight of a captured maiden, in fact there are fewer maidens. A new kind of charming humor has come to life. The books of these war years are being written with greater confidence and skill. Who knows what may lie around the corner?

Best Sellers Since 1924

For the following list the editors are indebted to the staff of Publishers' Weekly, SRL's *Forty-fifth Street neighbor and indispensable organ of the publishing industry.*

1924

Fiction

So Big—Edna Ferber.
The Plastic Age—Percy Marks.
The Little French Girl—Anne Douglas Sedgwick.
The Heirs Apparent—Philip Gibbs.
A Gentleman of Courage—James Oliver Curwood.
Call of the Canyon—Zane Grey.
The Midlander—Booth Tarkington.
Coast of Folly—Coningsby Dawson.
Mistress Wilding—Rafael Sabatini.
The Homemaker—Dorothy C. Fisher.

Non-Fiction

Diet and Health—Lulu Hunt Peters.
The Life of Christ—Giovanni Papini.
The Boston Cooking School Cook Book—Fannie Farmer.
Etiquette—Emily Post.
Ariel—André Maurois.
Cross Word Puzzle Books—Prosper Buranelli.
Autobiography—Mark Twain.
Saint Joan—Bernard Shaw.
New Decalogue of Science—Albert E. Wiggam.
The Americanization of Edward Bok—Edward Bok.

1925

Fiction

Soundings—A. Hamilton Gibbs.
The Constant Nymph—Margaret Kennedy.
The Keeper of the Bees—Gene Stratton-Porter.
Glorious Apollo—E. Barrington.
The Green Hat—Michael Arlen.
The Little French Girl—Anne Douglas Sedgwick.
Arrowsmith—Sinclair Lewis.
The Perennial Bachelor—Anne Parrish.
The Carolinian—Rafael Sabatini.
One Increasing Purpose—A. S. M. Hutchinson.

Non-Fiction

Diet and Health—Lulu Hunt Peters.
The Boston Cooking School Cook Book—Fannie Farmer.
When We Were Very Young—A. A. Milne.
The Man Nobody Knows—Bruce Barton.
The Life of Christ—Giovanni Papini.
Ariel—André Maurois.
Twice Thirty—Edward Bok.
Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916—Lord Edward Grey.
Anatole France, Himself—J. J. Brousson.
The Cross Word Puzzle Books—Prosper Buranelli.

1926

Fiction

The Private Life of Helen of Troy—John Erskine.
Gentlemen Prefer Blondes—Anita Loos.
Sorrell and Son—Warwick Deeping.
The Hounds of Spring—Sylvia Thompson.
Beau Sabreur—Percival C. Wren.
The Silver Spoon—John Galsworthy.
Beau Geste—Percival C. Wren.
Show Boat—Edna Ferber.
After Noon—Susan Ertz.
The Blue Window—Temple Bailey.
Hangman's House—Donn Byrne.
The Man Nobody Knows—Bruce Barton.

Non-Fiction

Why We Behave Like Human Beings—George A. Dorsey.
Diet and Health—Lulu Hunt Peters.
Our Times—Mark Sullivan.
The Boston Cooking School Cook Book—Fannie Farmer.
Auction Bridge Complete—Milton C. Work.
The Book Nobody Knows—Bruce Barton.
The Story of Philosophy—Will Durant.
The Light of Faith—Edgar A. Guest.
Jefferson and Hamilton—Claude G. Bowers.

1927

Fiction

Elmer Gantry—Sinclair Lewis.
The Plutocrat—Booth Tarkington.
Doomsday—Warwick Deeping.
Sorrell and Son—Warwick Deeping.
Jalna—Mazo de la Roche.
Lost Ecstasy—Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Twilight Sleep—Edith Wharton.
Tomorrow Morning—Anne Parrish.
The Old Countess—Anne Douglas Sedgwick.
A Good Woman—Louis Bromfield.

Non-Fiction

The Story of Philosophy—Will Durant.
Napoleon—Emil Ludwig.
Revolt in the Desert—T. E. Lawrence.
Trader Horn—Alfred A. Horn and Ethelreda Lewis.
"We"—Charles A. Lindbergh.
Ask Me Another—Julian Spafford and Lucien Esty.
The Royal Road to Romance—Richard Halliburton.
The Glorious Adventure—Richard Halliburton.
Why We Behave Like Human Beings—George A. Dorsey.
Mother India—Katherine Mayo.

1928

Fiction

The Bridge of San Luis Rey—Thornton Wilder.
Wintersmoon—Hugh Walpole.
Swan Song—John Galsworthy.
The Greene Murder Case—S. S. Van Dine.
Bad Girl—Vina Delmar.
Claire Ambler—Booth Tarkington.
Old Pybus—Warwick Deeping.
All Kneeling—Anne Parrish.
Jalna—Mazo de la Roche.
The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg—Louis Bromfield.
A President Is Born—Fannie Hurst.
Red Rust—Cornelia J. Cannon.

Non-Fiction

Disraeli—André Maurois.
Mother India—Katherine Mayo.
Trader Horn—Alfred A. Horn and Ethelreda Lewis.
Napoleon—Emil Ludwig.
Strange Interlude—Eugene O'Neill.
"We"—Charles A. Lindbergh.
Count Luckner the Sea Devil—Lowell Thomas.
Goethe—Emil Ludwig.
Skyward—Richard E. Byrd.
The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism—George Bernard Shaw.
Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing—Samuel Hoffenstein.
Safari—Martin Johnson.

1929

Fiction

All Quiet on the Western Front—Erich M. Remarque.

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Dodsworth—Sinclair Lewis.
Dark Hester—Anne Douglas Sedgwick.
The Bishop Murder Case—S. S. Van Dine.
Roper's Row—Warwick Deeping.
Peder Victorious—O. E. Rölvaag.
Mamba's Daughters—Du Bose Heyward.
The Galaxy—Susan Ertz.
Scarlet Sister Mary—Julia Peterkin.
Joseph and His Brethren—H. W. Freeman.
They Stooped to Folly—Ellen Glasgow.
Whiteoaks of Jalna—Mazo de la Roche.
A Farewell to Arms—Ernest Hemingway.
This Strange Adventure—Mary Roberts Rinehart.
The Case of Sergeant Grischa—Arnold Zweig.

Non-Fiction

The Art of Thinking—Ernest Dimnet.
Henry the Eighth—Francis Hackett.
The Cradle of the Deep—Joan Lowell.
Elizabeth and Essex—Lytton Strachey.
The Specialist—Chic Sale.
A Preface to Morals—Walter Lippmann.
Believe It or Not—Robert L. Ripley.
John Brown's Body—Stephen Vincent Benét.
The Tragic Era—Claude G. Bowers.
The Mansions of Philosophy—Will Durant.
The Magic Island—W. B. Seabrook.
Salt Water Taffy—Corey Ford.

1930

Fiction

Cimarron—Edna Ferber.
Exile—Warwick Deeping.
The Woman of Andros—Thornton Wilder.
Years of Grace—Margaret Ayer Barnes.
Angel Pavement—J. B. Priestley.
The Door—Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Rogue Herries—Hugh Walpole.
Chances—A. Hamilton Gibbs.
Young Man of Manhattan—Katharine Brush.
Twenty-Four Hours—Louis Bromfield.

Non-Fiction

The Story of San Michele—Axel Munthe.
The Strange Death of President Harding—Gaston B. Means and May Dixon Thacker.
Byron—André Maurois.
The Adams Family—James Truslow Adams.
Lone Cowboy—Will James.
Lincoln—Emil Ludwig.
The Story of Philosophy—Will Durant.
The Outline of History—H. G. Wells.
The Art of Thinking—Ernest Dimnet.
The Rise of American Civilization—Charles Beard and Mary Beard.

1931

Fiction

The Good Earth—Pearl S. Buck.
Shadows on the Rock—Willa Cather.
A White Bird Flying—Bess Streeter Aldrich.
Grand Hotel—Vicki Baum.
Years of Grace—Margaret Ayer Barnes.
The Road Back—Erich M. Remarque.
The Bridge of Desire—Warwick Deeping.
Back Street—Fannie Hurst.
Finch's Fortune—Mazo de la Roche.
Maid In Waiting—John Galsworthy.

Non-Fiction

Education of a Princess—Grand Duchess Marie.
The Story of San Michele—Axel Munthe.
Washington Merry-Go-Round—Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen.

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HOUSING IN SCANDINAVIA *By John Graham, Jr.*, $2.50

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Contract Bridge Blue Book—Ely Culbertson.
Fatal Interview—Edna St. V. Millay.
The Epic of America—James Truslow Adams.
Mexico—Stuart Chase.
New Russia's Primer—M. Ilin.

1932

Fiction

The Good Earth—Pearl S. Buck.
The Fountain—Charles Morgan.
Sons—Pearl S. Buck.
Magnolia Street—Louis Golding.
The Sheltered Life—Ellen Glasgow.
Old Wine and New—Warwick Deeping.
Mary's Neck—Booth Tarkington.
The Magnificent Obsession—Lloyd C. Douglas.
Inheritance—Phyllis Bentley.
Three Loves—A. J. Cronin.

Non-Fiction

The Epic of America—James Truslow Adams.
Only Yesterday—Frederick L. Allen.
A Fortune to Share—Vash Young.
Culbertson's Summary—Ely Culbertson.
Geography—Hendrik Van Loon.
What We Live By—Ernest Dimnet.
The March of Democracy—James Truslow Adams.
Washington Merry-Go-Round—Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen.
The Story of My Life—Clarence Darrow.
More Merry-Go-Round—Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen.

1933

Fiction

Anthony Adverse—Hervey Allen.
As the Earth Turns—Gladys Hasty Carroll.
Ann Vickers—Sinclair Lewis.
The Magnificent Obsession—Lloyd C. Douglas.
One More River—John Galsworthy.
Forgive Us Our Trespasses—Lloyd C. Douglas.
The Master of Jalna—Mazo de la Roche.
Miss Bishop—Bess Streeter Aldrich.
The Farm—Louis Bromfield.
Little Man, What Now?—Hans Fallada.

Non-Fiction

Life Begins at Forty—Walter B. Pitkin.
Marie Antoinette—Stefan Zweig.
British Agent—Bruce Lockhart.
100,000,000 Guinea Pigs—Arthur Kallet and F. J. Schlink.
The House of Exile—Nora Waln.
Geography—Hendrik Van Loon.
Looking Forward—Franklin D. Roosevelt.
Contract Bridge Blue Book of 1933—Ely Culbertson.
The Arches of the Years—Halliday Sutherland.
The March of Democracy, v. 2—James Truslow Adams.

1934

Fiction

Anthony Adverse—Hervey Allen.
Lamb in His Bosom—Caroline Miller.
So Red the Rose—Stark Young.
Good-Bye, Mr. Chips—James Hilton.
Within This Present—Margaret Ayer Barnes.
Work of Art—Sinclair Lewis.
Private Worlds—Phyllis Bottome.
Mary Peters—Mary Ellen Chase.
Oil For the Lamps of China—Alice Tisdale Hobart.
Seven Gothic Tales—Isak Dinesen.

Non-Fiction

While Rome Burns—Alexander Woollcott.
Life Begins at Forty—Walter B. Pitkin.
Nijinsky—Romola Nijinsky.
100,000,000 Guinea Pigs—Arthur Kallet and F. J. Schlink.
The Native's Return—Louis Adamic.
Stars Fell on Alabama—Carl Carmer.
Brazilian Adventure—Peter Fleming.
Forty-Two Years in the White House—Ike Hoover.
You Must Relax—Edmund Jacobson.
The Life of Our Lord—Charles Dickens.

1935

Fiction

Green Light—Lloyd C. Douglas.
Vein of Iron—Ellen Glasgow.
Of Time and the River—Thomas Wolfe.
Time Out of Mind—Rachel Field.

Good-Bye, Mr. Chips—James Hilton.
The Forty Days of Musa Dagh—Franz Werfel.
Heaven's My Destination—Thornton Wilder.
Lost Horizon—James Hilton.
Come and Get It—Edna Ferber.
Europa—Robert Briffault.
It Can't Happen Here—Sinclair Lewis.

Non-Fiction

North to the Orient—Anne Morrow Lindbergh.
While Rome Burns—Alexander Woollcott.
Life with Father—Clarence Day.
Personal History—Vincent Sheean.
Seven Pillars of Wisdom—T. E. Lawrence.
Francis the First—Francis Hackett.
Mary Queen of Scotland and the Isles—Stefan Zweig.
Rats, Lice and History—Hans Zinsser.
Robert E. Lee—Douglas S. Freeman.
Skin Deep—M. C. Phillips.

1936

Fiction

Gone With the Wind—Margaret Mitchell.
The Last Puritan—George Santayana.
Sparkenbroke—Charles Morgan.
Drums Along the Mohawk—Walter D. Edmonds.
It Can't Happen Here—Sinclair Lewis.
White Banners—Lloyd C. Douglas.
The Hurricane—Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall.
The Thinking Reed—Rebecca West.

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The Doctor—Mary Roberts Rinehart.
Eyeless in Gaza—Aldous Huxley.

Non-Fiction

Man the Unknown—Alexis Carrel.
Wake Up and Live—Dorothea Brande.
The Way of a Transgressor—Negley Farson.
Around the World in Eleven Years—Patience, Richard and John Abbe.
North to the Orient—Anne Morrow Lindbergh.
An American Doctor's Odyssey—Victor Heiser.
Inside Europe—John Gunther.
Live alone and Like It—Marjorie Hillis.
Life With Father—Clarence Day.
I Write as I Please—Walter Duranty.

1937

Fiction

Gone with the Wind—Margaret Mitchell.
Northwest Passage—Kenneth Roberts.
The Citadel—A. J. Cronin.
And So—Victoria—Vaughan Wilkins.
Drums Along the Mohawk—Walter D. Edmonds.
The Years—Virginia Woolf .
Theatre—W. Somerset Maugham.
Of Mice and Men—John Steinbeck.
The Rains Came—Louis Bromfield.
We Are Not Alone—James Hilton.

Non-Fiction

How to Win Friends and Influence People—Dale Carnegie.
An American Doctor's Odyssey—Victor Heiser.
The Return to Religion—Henry C. Link.
The Arts—Hendrik Van Loon.
Orchids on Your Budget—Marjorie Hillis.
Present Indicative—Noel Coward.
Mathematics for the Million—Lancelot Hogben.
Life with Mother—Clarence Day.
The Nile—Emil Ludwig.
The Flowering of New England—Van Wyck Brooks.

1938

Fiction

The Yearling—Marjorie K. Rawlings.
The Citadel—A. J. Cronin.
My Son, My Son!—Howard Spring.
Rebecca—Daphne Du Maurier.
Northwest Passage—Kenneth Roberts.
All This, and Heaven Too—Rachel Field.
The Rains Came—Louis Bromfield.
And Tell of Time—Laura Krey.
The Mortal Storm—Phyllis Bottome.
Action at Aquila—Hervey Allen.

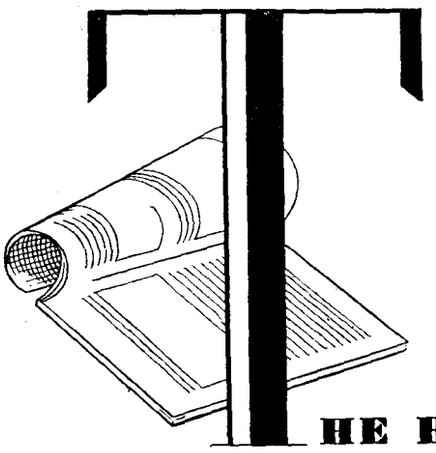
Non-Fiction

The Importance of Living—Lin Yutang.
With Malice Toward Some—Margaret Halsey.
Madame Curie—Eve Curie.
Listen! The Wind—Anne Morrow Lindbergh.
The Horse and Buggy Doctor—Arthur E. Hertzler.
How to Win Friends and Influence People—Dale Carnegie.
Benjamin Franklin—Carl Van Doren.
I'm a Stranger Here Myself—Ogden Nash.
Alone—Richard E. Byrd.
Fanny Kemble—Margaret Armstrong.

1939

Fiction

The Grapes of Wrath—John Steinbeck.
All This, and Heaven Too—Rachel Field.
Rebecca—Daphne Du Maurier.
Wickford Point—John P. Marquand.



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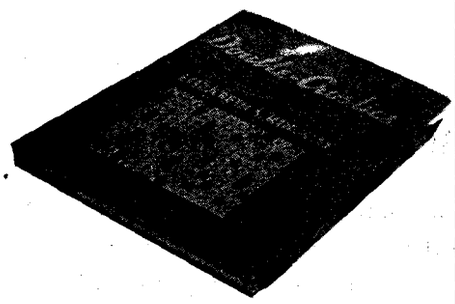

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Non-Fiction

Days of Our Years—Pierre Van Paassen.
Reaching for the Stars—Nora Waln.
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Autobiography with Letters—William Lyon Phelps.
Country Lawyer—Bellamy Partridge.
Wind, Sand and Stars—Antoine de St. Exupéry.
Mein Kampf—Adolf Hitler.
A Peculiar Treasure—Edna Ferber.
Not Peace But a Sword—Vincent Sheean.
Listen! The Wind—Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

1940

Fiction

How Green Was My Valley—Richard Llewellyn.
Kitty Foyle—Christopher Morley.
Mrs. Miniver—Jan Struther.
For Whom the Bell Tolls—Ernest Hemingway.
The Nazarene—Sholem Asch.
Stars on the Sea—F. Van Wyck Mason.
Oliver Wiswell—Kenneth Roberts.
The Grapes of Wrath—John Steinbeck.
Night in Bombay—Louis Bromfield.
The Family—Nina Fedorova.

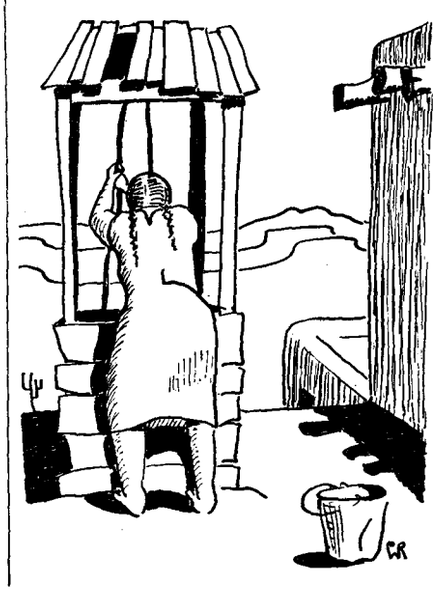
Non-Fiction

I Married Adventure—Osa Johnson.
How to Read a Book—Mortimer Adler.
A Smattering of Ignorance—Oscar Levant.
Country Squire in the White House—John T. Flynn.
Land Below the Wind—Agnes Newton Keith.
American White Paper—Joseph W. Alsop, Jr., and Robert Kintner.
New England: Indian Summer—Van Wyck Brooks.
As I Remember Him—Hans Zinsser.
Days of Our Years—Pierre Van Paassen.
Bet It's a Boy—Betty B. Blunt.

1941

Fiction

The Keys of the Kingdom—A. J. Cronin.
Random Harvest—James Hilton.



This Above All—Eric Knight.
The Sun Is My Undoing—Marguerite Steen.
For Whom the Bell Tolls—Ernest Hemingway.
Oliver Wiswell—Kenneth Roberts.
H. M. Pulham, Esquire—John P. Marquand.
Mr. and Mrs. Cugat—Isabel Scott Rorick.
Saratoga Trunk—Edna Ferber.
Windswept—Mary Ellen Chase.

Non-Fiction

Berlin Diary—William L. Shirer.
The White Cliffs—Alice Duer Miller.
Out of the Night—Jan Valtin.
Inside Latin America—John Gunther.
Blood, Sweat and Tears—Winston S. Churchill.
You Can't Do Business with Hitler—Douglas S. Miller.
Reading I've Liked—Clifton Fadiman.
Reveille in Washington—Margaret Leech.
Exit Laughing—Irvin S. Cobb.
My Sister and I—Dirk van der Heide.

1942

Fiction

The Song of Bernadette—Franz Werfel.
The Moon Is Down—John Steinbeck.
Dragon Seed—Pearl S. Buck.
And Now Tomorrow—Rachel Field.
Drivin' Woman—Elizabeth Pickett.
Windswept—Mary Ellen Chase.
The Robe—Lloyd C. Douglas.
The Sun Is My Undoing—Marguerite Steen.
Kings Row—Henry Bellamann.
The Keys of the Kingdom—A. J. Cronin.

Non-Fiction

See Here, Private Hargrove—Marion Hargrove.
Mission to Moscow—Joseph E. Davies.
The Last Time I Saw Paris—Elliot Paul.
Cross Creek—Margaret K. Rawlings.
Victory Through Air Power—Maj. Alexander P. de Seversky.
Past Imperfect—Ilka Chase.
They Were Expendable—W. L. White.
Flight to Arras—Antoine de St. Exupéry.
Washington Is Like That—W. M. Kiplinger.
Inside Latin America—John Gunther.

1943

Fiction

The Robe—Lloyd C. Douglas.
The Valley of Decision—Marcia Davenport.
So Little Time—John P. Marquand.
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—Betty Smith.
The Human Comedy—William Saroyan.
Mrs. Parkington—Louis Bromfield.
The Apostle—Sholem Asch.
Hungry Hill—Daphne Du Maurier.
The Forest and the Fort—Hervey Allen.
The Song of Bernadette—Franz Werfel.

Non-Fiction

Under Cover—John Roy Carlson.
One World—Wendell L. Willkie.
Journey Among Warriors—Eve Curie.
On Being a Real Person—Henry Emerson Fosdick.
Guadalcanal Diary—Richard Tregaskis.
Burma Surgeon—Lt. Col. Gordon Seagrave.
Our Hearts Were Young and Gay—Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kimbrough.
U. S. Foreign Policy—Walter Lippmann.
Here Is Your War—Ernie Pyle.
See Here, Private Hargrove—Marion Hargrove.

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Death Takes a Holiday

JUDGE LYNCH

THIS year happens to be the twentieh anniversary of one of the best detective stories ever written—"The Cask," by Freeman Wills Croft. It was published by Thomas Seltzer and it started Judge Lynch on his career of crime. Not professionally—that didn't happen for another decade, but it was the first real draught of the cup that chills. Before that there had been "The Leavenworth Case" and certain adventures of a Mr. S. Holmes but "The Cask" and 1924, like 1066 and all that, were milestones marked in gore. In that same year H. C. Bailey wrote about the rotund Reggie in "Mr. Fortune's Practice" and another real classic of detective literature appeared—perhaps the first appearance of a blind detective—in Ernest Bramah's well remembered "The Eyes of Max Carrados."

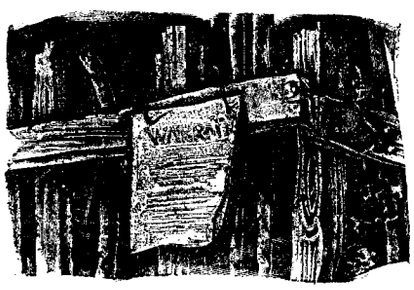
But 1924 was not an especially productive year in detective stories. In the preceding twelve-month Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had yielded to entreaties and had written "The Return of Sherlock Holmes." Also in 1923 Ben Hecht had brandished "The Florentine Dagger" before a public not quite used to such things in their mystery stories. Dorothy Sayers wrote "Whose Body?" Harrington Hext, thus disguising Mr. Eden Philpotts, presented "Who Killed Cock Robin?"—another story still hard to beat—and Mr. J. S. Fletcher wrote "The Mazaroff Mystery and "King Vs. Wargrave." We'll go back just one more year before swinging back into the onward flowing stream—merely to mention that A. A. Milne's "Red House Mystery" was published in 1922 and is just as readable today as it was then.

In 1925 and 1926 there were two notable books—G. K. Chesterton's "The Chesterton's "The Incredulity of Father Brown" and that iconoclast among detective stories, Agatha Christie's "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" in which the author broke all the rules and produced a masterpiece. H. Austin Freeman wrote "The Singing Bone" which varied the program by beginning at the end and progressing to the murder.

Then in 1926, when Mary Roberts Rinehart wrote "The Red Lamp" and Edgar Wallace offered "The Ringer" and "King By Night," a new name appeared. It was that of S. S. Van Dine, whose "Benson Murder Case" first brought Philo Vance and his Régie cigarettes before a public that, not too much impressed at first, proceeded to gobble up Philo at increasing speed.

S. S. Van Dine was the first of the Great New Names to appear, and he was to do his best work in "The Greene Murder Case" published in 1928. The following year, 1929, was notable for the arrival of a name that still goes on—Ellery Queen—whose "The Roman Hat Mystery" published in that year, and its successors "The French Powder . . ." and "Greek Coffin . . ." still, in our opinion, are the author's best work—although in this gallery we may mention those three masterful jobs by Barnaby Ross—a pen name for the two gents who use the pseudonym of Ellery Queen—"The Tragedy of X" also "Y" and "Z." After the arrival of Van Dine and the Queens and the huge increase in both publication of, and interest in, mystery stories the Great Names come thick and fast. There are a few gaps in the Judge's records but it seems that in 1931 John Dixon Carr wrote his first Inspector Bencolin story, "Castle Skull," and in 1929 Dashiell Hammett flashed over the detective horizon with that mass-murder yarn to end them all—"Red Harvest." It was four years later that the Hammett magnum opus—"The Thin Man"—made new marks in mystery annals. In 1931 Mignon Eberhart began her long and successful career with "The Patient in Room 18."

Leslie Ford and her alter ego David Frome with Col. Primrose, Mrs. Latham and Mr. Pinkerton made their debut during these great years of the detective story. So did Ngaio Marsh, whose earlier stories went a-begging around the publishers, they say, until one firm, now defunct, had the courage to publish "Death in a White Tie" and bring the Antipodean writer before an American audience that has grabbed up everything she has written since 1939.



But we are running a little too far ahead chronologically. Returning to 1933 and 1934 we find another new name on the lists—that of Erle Stanley Gardner whose "Case of the Velvet Claws" and "Case of the Lucky Legs" established the fame of Perry Mason, not long after to be followed by Doug. Selby in the "D. A." series and by Bertha Clunk and Donald Lam in the stories written by one A. A. Fair—so called. In '35 there came two robust, raucous, bawdy and illustrious yarns by an author whose voice has been but little heard since that time. They're worth reading over again if you like care-free uninhibited toughness—"Headed for A Hearse" and "Lady in the Morgue," by Jonathan Latimer. It was in this year, too, Helen Reilly introduced the braw New York Scotsman "McKee of Center Street" and Dorothy Sayers wrote that tin-tin-abulating tale, "The Nine Tailors." 1939 marked the debut of Elliot Paul as a mystery story writer. Then and in the following year came Mr. Paul's hilarious and grisly "The Mysterious Mickey Finn" and "Hugger Mugger in the Louvre." This same production era produced Nero Wolfe and such star Rex Stout performances as "Too Many Cooks"—the only detective story in history with a cookery-book appendix. And in 1939 came that truly great mystery story "A Coffin for Demitrios," by Eric Ambler—not of the true detective type but one of the most suspenseful tales ever written. A year later, in 1940, Mr. and Mrs. North began their criminal careers in "The Norths Meet Murder." These are not all, by any means, but the names and titles listed give a fairly comprehensive notion of what was possibly the great age of the detective story. Since 1940, with a few exceptions the game has been in the hands of the same players, so far as the noteworthy jobs are concerned. If any stars in the firmament have been missed in this brief survey it is simply because there are so many of them. Some of the Great Ones are gone—Chesterton, Conan Doyle, Van Dine, Austin Freeman, Carolyn Wells—but the newcomers are good and, generally speaking, the detective story is better today than it ever was. A little static, perhaps, but better written, and more intelligently plotted than in the B.V.D. period, which, being interpreted, means Before Van Dine.

Back in 1936 a gentleman named John Hawk wrote a story that, so far as one can discover, was not published in America. It was called "Murder of a Mystery Story Writer."

Well . . .

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FICTION

1924 The Able McLaughlins, by Margaret Wilson. (Harper.)
1925 So Big, by Edna Ferber. (Doubleday, Doran.)
1926 Arrowsmith, by Sinclair Lewis. (Harcourt, Brace.)
1927 Early Autumn, by Louis Bromfield. (Stokes.)
1928 The Bridge of San Luis Rey, by Thornton Wilder. (Boni.)
1929 Scarlet Sister Mary, by Julia Peterkin. (Bobbs-Merrill.)
1930 Laughing Boy, by Oliver La Farge. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1931 Years of Grace, by Margaret Ayer Barnes. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1932 The Good Earth, by Pearl S. Buck. (John Day.)
1933 The Store, by Thomas S. Stribling. (Doubleday, Doran.)
1934 Lamb in His Bosom, by Caroline Miller. (Harper.)
1935 Now in November, by Josephine W. Johnson. (Simon & Schuster.)
1936 Honey in the Horn, by Harold L. Davis. (Harper.)
1937 Gone with the Wind, by Margaret Mitchell. (Macmillan.)
1938 The Late George Apley, by John P. Marquand. (Little, Brown.)
1939 The Yearling, by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. (Scribner.)
1940 The Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck. (Viking.)
1941 No award.
1942 In This Our Life, by Ellen Glasgow. (Harcourt, Brace.)
1943 Dragon's Teeth, by Upton Sinclair. (Viking.)
1944 Journey in the Dark, by Martin Flavin. (Harper.)

DRAMA

1924 Hell-Bent for Heaven, by Hatcher Hughes. (Harper.)
1925 They Knew What They Wanted, by Sidney Howard. (Doubleday, Doran.)
1926 Craig's Wife, by George Kelly. (Little, Brown.)
1927 In Abraham's Bosom, by Paul Green. (McBride.)
1928 Strange Interlude, by Eugene O'Neill. (Random House.)
1929 Street Scene, by Elmer Rice. (French.)
1930 The Green Pastures, by Marc Connelly. (Farrar & Rinehart.)
1931 Alison's House, by Susan Glaspell. (French.)
1932 Of Thee I Sing, by George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind. (Knopf.)
1933 Both Your Houses, by Maxwell Anderson. (French.)
1934 Men in White, by Sidney Kingsley. (Covici-Friede.)
1935 The Old Maid, by Zoë Akins. A dramatization of the novel by Edith Wharton. (Appleton-Century.)
1936 Idiot's Delight, by Robert E. Sherwood. (Scribner.)
1937 You Can't Take It with You, by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. (Farrar & Rinehart.)
1938 Our Town, by Thornton Wilder. (Coward-McCann.)
1939 Abe Lincoln in Illinois, by Robert E. Sherwood. (Scribner.)
1940 The Time of Your Life, by William Saroyan. (Harcourt, Brace.)
1941 There Shall Be No Night, by Robert E. Sherwood. (Scribner.)
1942 No award.
1943 The Skin of Our Teeth, by Thornton Wilder. (Harper.)
1944 No drama award. Special award to "Oklahoma!," by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, 2nd. (Random.)

HISTORY

1924 The American Revolution: A Constitutional Interpretation, by Charles Howard McIlwain. (Macmillan.)
1925 A History of the American Frontier, 1763-1893, by Frederic Logan Paxson. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1926 The History of the United States, by Edward Channing. (Macmillan.)
1927 Pinckney's Treaty: A Study of America's Advantage from Europe's Distress, by Samuel Flagg Bemis. (Johns Hopkins Press.)
1928 Main Currents in American Thought, by Vernon Louis Parrington. (Harcourt, Brace.)
1929 Organization and Administration of the Union Army 1861-1865, by Fred Albert Shannon. (A. H. Clark.)
1930 The War of Independence, by Claude H. Van Tyne. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1931 The Coming of the War: 1914, by Bernadotte Everly Schmitt. (Scribner.)
1932 My Experiences in the World War, by General John J. Pershing. (Stokes.)

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1933 The Significance of Sections in American History, by Frederick Jackson Turner. (Holt.)
1934 The People's Choice, by Herbert Agar. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1935 The Colonial Period of American History, Vol. 1, by Charles McLean Andrews. (Yale.)
1936 A Constitutional History of the United States, by Andrew Cunningham McLaughlin. (Appleton-Century.)
1937 The Flowering of New England, by Van Wyck Brooks. (Dutton.)
1938 The Road to Reunion, by Paul Herman Buck. (Little, Brown.)
1939 A History of American Magazines, by Frank Luther Mott. (Harvard.)
1940 Abraham Lincoln: The War Years, by Carl Sandburg. (Harcourt, Brace.)
1941 The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860, by Marcus Lee Hansen. (Harvard.)
1942 Reveille in Washington, by Margaret Leech. (Harper.)
1943 Paul Revere and the World He Lived In, by Esther Forbes. (Houghton Mifflin.)
1944 The Growth of American Thought, by Merle Curti. (Harper.)

BIOGRAPHY

1924 From Immigrant to Inventor, by Michael Idvorsky Pupin. (Scribner.)
1925 Barrett Wendell and His Letters, by M. A. DeWolfe Howe. (Little, Brown.)
1926 Life of Sir William Osler, by Harvey Cushing. (Oxford.)
1927 Whitman, an Interpretation in Narrative, by Emory Holloway. (Knopf.)
1928 The American Orchestra and Theodore Thomas, by Charles Edward Russell. (Doubleday, Doran.)
1929 The Training of an American: The Earlier Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page, by Burton J. Hendrick. (Houghton Mifflin.)
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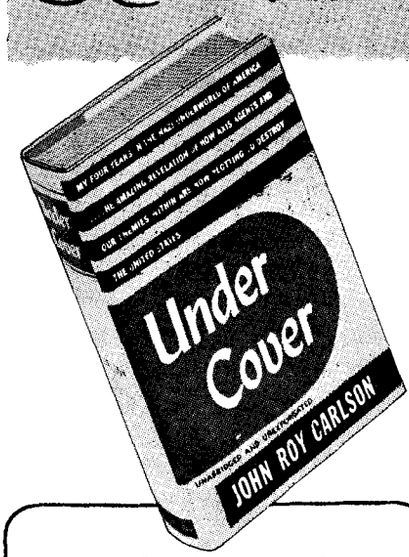

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1925. Selina DeJong, in "So Big," by Edna Ferber.
1926. Martin Arrowsmith, in "Arrowsmith," by Sinclair Lewis.
1927. Olivia Pentland, in "Early Autumn," by Louis Bromfield.
1928. Brother Juniper, in "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," by Thornton Wilder.
1929. "Scarlet Sister Mary," by Julia Peterkin.
1930. "Laughing Boy," by Oliver La Farge.
1931. Jane Carver, in "Years of Grace," by Margaret Ayer Barnes.
1932. Wang Lung, in "The Good Earth," by Pearl Buck.
1933. Miltiades Vaiden, in "The Store," by T. S. Stribling.
1934. Cean Carver, in "Lamb in His Bosom," by Caroline Miller.
1934. Marget Haldmarne, in "Now in November," by Josephine Johnson.
1936. Clay Calvert, in "Honey in the Horn," by H. L. Davis.
1937. Scarlett O'Hara in "Gone With the Wind," by Margaret Mitchell.
1938. "The Late George Apley," by John Marquand.
1939. Jody Baxter, in "The Yearling," by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.
1940. Tom Joad, in "The Grapes of Wrath," by John Steinbeck.
1941. No award was made.
1942. Asa Timberlake, in "In This Our Life," by Ellen Glasgow.
1943. Lanny Budd, in "Dragon's Teeth," by Upton Sinclair.
1944. Sam Braden, in "Journey in the Dark," by Martin Flavin.

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Contributors to This Issue

BERNARD DEVOTO, sometime editor of *The Saturday Review,* a brilliant teacher of writing, a novelist, is recognized as one of the most vigorous and original of American historical writers. He has been not only a commentator on his period, but very actively a part of its achievements and controversies. Among Mr. DeVoto's important contributions to Americana and American literature are "Mark Twain's America," "The Year of Decision," and "The Literary Fallacy." ("The Maturity of American Literature," page 14.)

CLIFTON FADIMAN came to wide reputation as the brilliant literary editor of *The New Yorker* for many years, and is now nationally known as conductor of "Information Please." He is a critic of courage and discrimination, who probably has read wisely and judiciously more contemporary American fiction than any other commentator. ("The American Novel," page 19.)

PAUL SCHRECKER, Viennese by origin, is well-known all throughout Europe as a distinguished philosopher. He was formerly on the staff of the Sorbonne, and in recent years, under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation, was a most fruitful student of aspects of American life. He knows intellectual Europe to its core, and has had remarkable opportunities to study the *mores* of America. ("Literature in Contemporary Civilization," page 22.)

JACQUES BARZUN, born in Paris, now professor of history at Columbia University, is an able student of racial and national culture both here and abroad, and one of the ablest critics of our intellectual life. He is author of a number of distinguished historical studies, among them "Darwin, Marx, Wagner," "The French Race: Theories of Its Origins," and "Race: Theories of Its Origins." ("The Literature of Ideas," page 25.)

F. S. C. NORTHROP, educator and thinker, is professor of philosophy at Yale and Master of Silliman College, one of the first professional philosophers to explore the relationships between the new discoveries of physical science and philosophical thinking. ("Literature and Science," page 32.)

JAMES T. FARRELL, author of the Studs Lonigan series and other novels, is a distinguished successor to Dreiser in studies of the common people and American democracy, a fearless realist with a first-hand knowledge of his subject. ("Culture for the People," page 29.)

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH has been for many years dramatic critic of *The Nation* and is now Brander Mathews professor of dramatic literature at Columbia University. He has been distinguished not only for his scholarship but for his original and authentic views of the qualities of contemporary plays in the twenty-year period in which *The Saturday Review* has been published. ("Twenty Years of the American Drama," page 36.)

CHRISTOPHER LAFARGE, American novelist, poet, and critic, has devoted himself for the last few years to a multitude of activities connected with the war. Some of the most distinguished reporting of the war in the Pacific has appeared under his name in *Harper's Magazine* and has just appeared in a book entitled "East by Southwest." ("The Narrative Poetry of Stephen Vincent Benét," page 106.)

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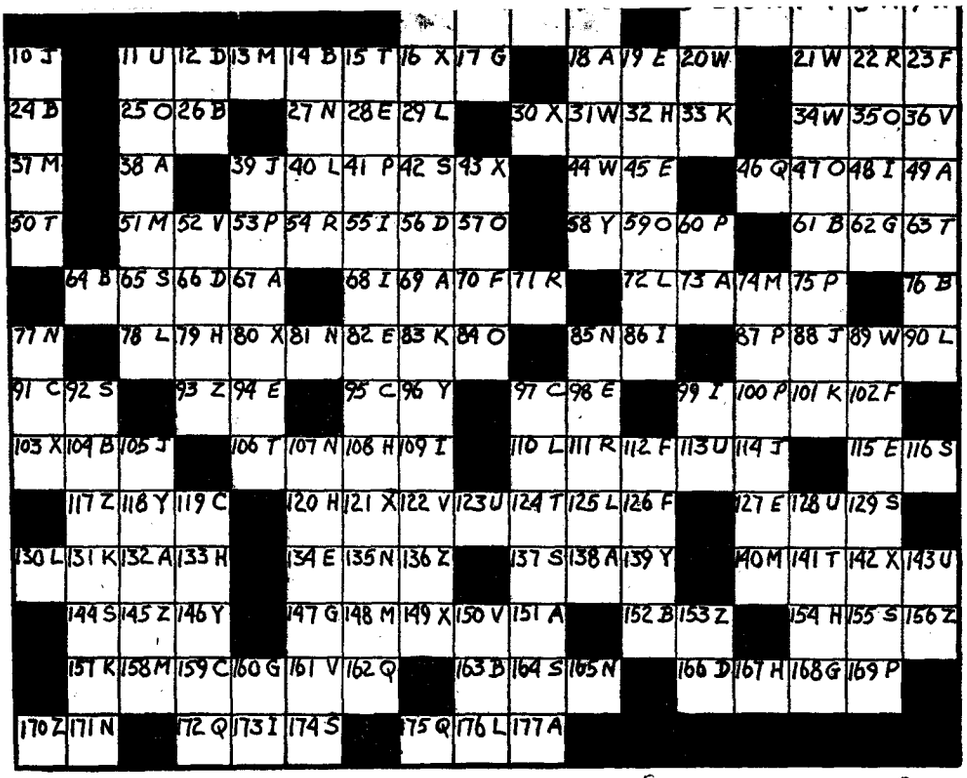
The Crostics Club

WHEN I come across in my new "Webster's Biographical Dictionary" a name that fits into the scheme of things, I do not accept it at once as valid for our DCs. I note what the person has done to warrant our knowing him at least by name. For instance, although I had never heard of the French sculptor Rochet, the fact that he was responsible for statues of Napoleon and Charlemagne accepted by Paris seemed to give stature to his name; and, of course, as a resident of New York City I have long been familiar with the work of Irwin Edman both as a radio speaker in his role of professor of philosophy at Columbia University and a writer of books like "Philosopher's Holiday," to say nothing of his humorous poems contributed to current magazines, in the manner of the late Arthur Guiterman. I mention these two names because a recent communication from the Pacific Coast asks me if I had invented them. I suggest that the Encyclopedia Britannica, worthy as it is, cannot be expected to include those not established by time and that a reference book of lesser fame would be more practical.

B. L. Kime, Chicago, calls my attention to my incorrect use of *due* in a recent column, "due to Red Cross demands," thus: "I quote Fowler's 'Modern English usage,' pg. 123: Under the influence of ANALOGY, *due to* is often used by the illiterate as though it had passed, like *owing to*, into a mere compound preposition . . . *due* . . . like ordinary particles and adjectives must be attached to a noun." I stand corrected and am only surprised that my sins in loose construction and misuse of words have not long ago branded me as no trained columnist. But in this connection I wish some one would enlighten me with authority as to the proper respective use of *that* and *which* as relative pronouns. In a stiff rhetoric course in high school we were taught to use *that* in a restrictive clause and *which* in a clause of explanation in which *and he, she, it* might be substituted for *which* (with of course a few exceptions). Yet rarely do I find this discrimination followed by even our good writers. The use of *shall* and *will* seem to me similarly abused.

Franklin Day, New York, enclosing a clever narrative to expose the variety of words used in puzzle 17 of Series 16, comments in friendly vein to the effect that the text of DCs 537 and 538 were "hardly worth the trouble as the text usually is." I am sorry to hear this but glad that he told me. "The First Garden," aside from its Canadian author, I liked for its emotional appeal; whereas the "Hawthorn and Lavender" by Henley I selected from a poem of his neglected for his more famous "Invictus," and as a contrast in mood. E. S. K.



Double-Crostics: No. 541

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 41 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Mountain range in New Guinea

B. Stones so formed as to appear as if cut by art.

C. One of two brothers, American journalists and writers (1873-).

D. Promised solemnly.

E. Excitability (Physiol.)

F. Having a quality like a clarinet.

G. English painter and sculptor (1807-1904) (300 portraits of distintinguished contemporaries).

H. Intoxicated.

I. Epithet of a maid in famous ballad in "Percy's Reliques" (comp.)

J. Barren; sordid; dull; powdery.

K. Heretofore.

L. Somewhat slow (Music).

M. The more liberal or radical element of a party (2 wds.)

N. Bacteriologist, born in Russia, Pasteur's assistant, discoverer in India of inoculation against cholera, etc. (1860-1930).

O. City and county in central New York.

P. Member of Second Triumvirate (43 B. C.; "Julius Caesar.")

Q. Spattered with soft mud or the like.

R. Dash; ardor (Fr.)

S. Conjectural.

T. Clothes, esp. of a particular kind (colloq.)

U. Character in "Adam Bede."

V. Complete; entire; each and all.

W. Snarls.

X. U. S. south-central State and its capital city.

Y. Sultan of Morocco, 1912-27 (policy of friendship with France).

Z. A counterpoised sweep for raising water used in Egypt, etc.

WORDS

73 18 69 49 151 138 38 8 132 67 177

104 14 5 64 152 163 76 61 26 24

91 119 97 95 159

66 12 56 4 166

98 28 45 115 19 127 94 82 134

112 102 70 126 23

168 62 160 17 147

167 120 32 154 79 9 108 133

86 48 173 68 3 55 99 109

105 88 114 39 10

33 101 2 83 131 157

90 176 40 130 110 29 72 78 125

74 37 51 148 1 158 13 140

107 27 171 77 81 85 135 165

59 57 25 35 84 47

53 100 87 41 75 60 169

175 172 162 46

111 54 22 71

129 155 116 42 164 65 174 144 137 92

106 124 15 50 7 141 63

123 113 11 128 143

161 36 52 150 122

89 31 6 34 20 44 21

121 43 80 142 16 103 30 149

58 118 139 146 96

156 145 93 136 117 170 153

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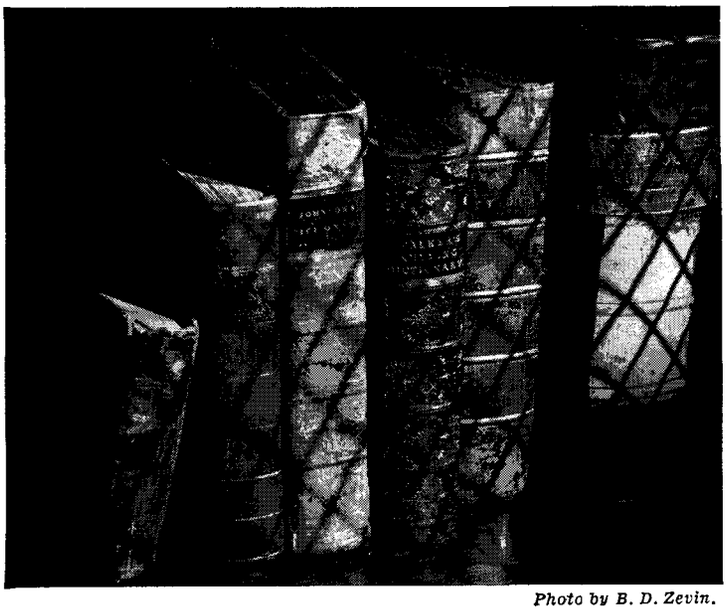

Photo by B. D. Zevin.

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* * *

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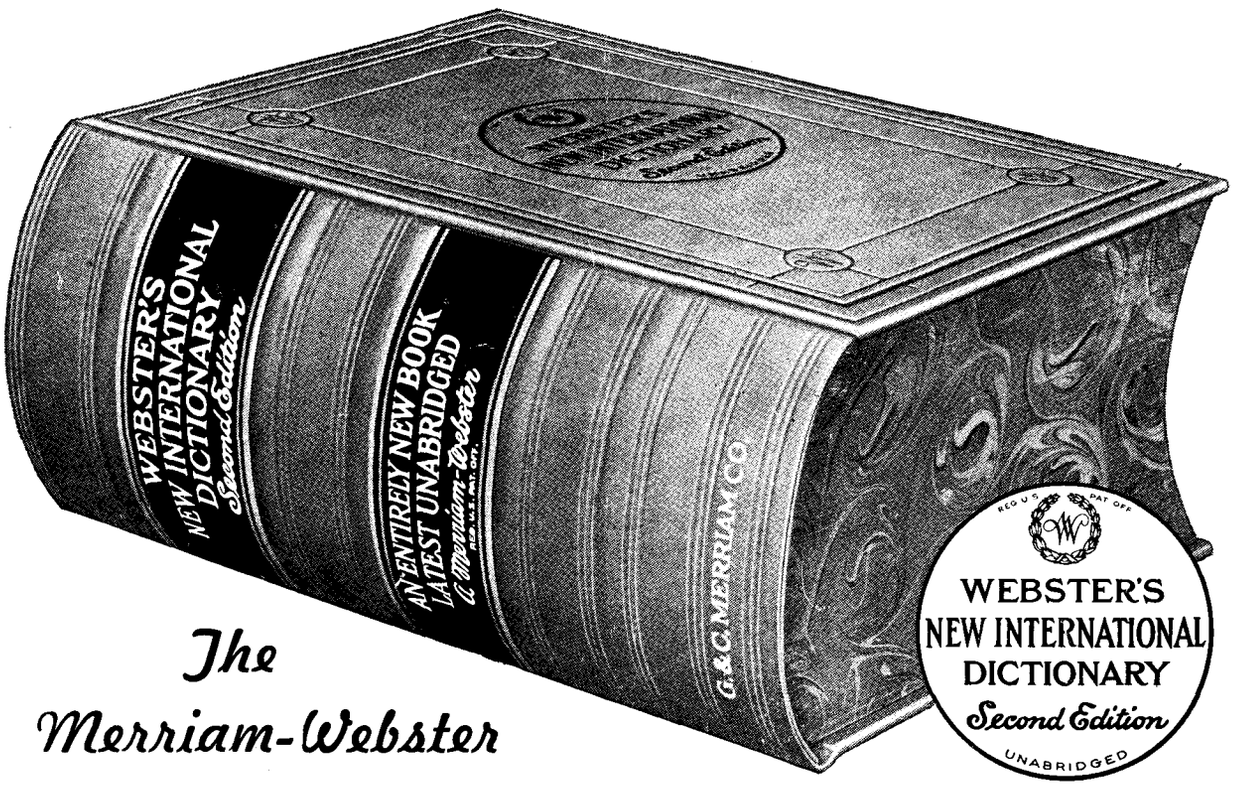
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